PNP calls off manhunt for Lacson, Honasan

STORY BELOW, COLUMN 5

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BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

WEDNESDAY, MAY 9, 2001 ★ 62 PAGES 5 SECTIONS VOL.16 NO. 150 P15

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Girls don't run from plotters

By C. Avendaño

CONCEPCION, Tarlac—Don't underestimate women, said former President Corazon Aquino,

CORY/ A20

DI TUMATAKBO KAMING MGA BABAE TULAD NG IBA DIYAN!

Coup financiers named

PNP report says suspects into drug dealing, smuggling, gambling

By Christine Herrera

AT LEAST 18 Chinese-Filipino cronies of deposed President Joseph Estrada and supporters of senatorial candidate Panfilo "Ping" Lacson Jr. allegedly contributed P500 million to a "power grab kitty" for the overthrow of President Macapagal-Arroyo, an intelligence report submitted to the Philippine National Police chief said.

Another P500 million was set aside as reserve money, according to the report "Funding Structures and Mechanism for the May 1 Rebellion," signed by two ranking PNP intelligence officers.

Two of the alleged financiers denied giving money to the alleged plot.

The three-page report described the financiers of the rebellion as "shady characters suspected of involvement in drug dealing, smuggling and jai alai operations."

PNP Director General Leandro Mendoza has ordered an investigation of the contributors who, he said, may be held liable for "grand conspiracy."

"This is contrary to what the opposition had been claiming that the power grab was spontaneous. These contributors may be held liable for conspiracy to overthrow the government," Mendoza said.

The report also named businessman Mark Jimenez, a fugitive from US justice and a candidate for congressman in Manila, as one of the four sources of funds for the coup plotters.

The other sources of funds were Chinese-Filipino businessmen in Cebu and Bohol (P250

COUP/ A22

GMA says worst over, plotters on the run

By Juliet L. Javellana

WHILE the military and police are "still on guard," President Macapagal-Arroyo is no longer bothered by the threat posed against her administration by Joseph Estrada's allies.

Her spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao aired this assurance yesterday in response to an earlier statement by Maj. Gen. Dionisio Santiago, commander of the anti-coup Task Force Libra, that the worst was not over.

Santiago had said that a substantial number of troops would remain prepared to counter armed challenges to the government despite the lifting Sunday of the five-day state of rebellion in Metro Manila.

"Usually the military frame of mind is that they prepare for the worst," Tiglao said in a phone interview.

GMA /A20

Money, drugs booze, tools for SEA violence

HONG KONG—Money, alcohol and drugs are proving to be effective tools for politicians and backroom power wielders aiming to mobilize mass protests and incite violence in Southeast Asia, analysts say.

President Macapagal-Arroyo, speaking after the May 1 riot in Manila by supporters of deposed President Joseph Estrada, claimed that "drug-crazed" protesters were paid and "programmed to hate, to maim and even to kill by the power-grabbers."

Similar reports surfaced from the orgy of looting, destruction and killing by pro-Indonesian militia in East Timor before and after the independence vote in August 1999.

Witnesses and human rights observers there said some militiamen, who reduced much of the half-island to ashes, were high on alcohol and drugs allegedly provided by elements within the Indonesian Army seeking to whip them into a frenzy of violence.

MONEY/ A22

CONCERN is etched on the face of a mother, Rosalina Donato, as she and her husband are reunited yesterday with their four children at the Western Police District pelota court where they had been detained after their arrest at Mendiola on May 1. ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

Gov't frees 89 Erap supporters

By Jerome Aning
and Dave Veridiano

TO LEVEL the playing field, President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday ordered the temporary release of 89 supporters of ousted leader Joseph Estrada who were jailed in connection with the May 1 riot outside Malacañang.

Social Welfare Secretary Corazon "Dinky" Soliman, Justice Undersecretary Manuel Teehankee and Pampanga Gov. Lito Lapid announced the good news to Estrada's poor supporters detained at the Western Police District headquarters in Manila and Philippine National Police headquarters in Quezon City.

The announcement came three days after two suspected leaders of the rebellion—opposition Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile and former Ambassador to the United States Ernesto Maceda—were allowed to post bail and released.

"That's good," Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes said of Ms Macapagal's order. "It's better that they (poor detainees) are released so that they will know that they are not being persecuted."

Soliman told the detainees at the WPD headquarters that the President cared for them.

"She understands the poor have legitimate grievances and that other people who manipulated them should be the ones to pay the price," the social welfare secretary said.

GOV'T/ A22

'Mama, papa, why are you in jail?'

By Jerome Aning

LIKE a family who have missed each other, mother and father and children tried to make up for lost time. But a chicken wire mesh separated them. There could be no hugs and kisses. There was a rush of questions from the children.

"Mama, papa, why are you there? Are you sick? Can we touch you?" the four young children asked their parents, Norberto and Rosalina Donato, when they met at the Western Police District's (WPD) pelota court yesterday.

The questions brought smiles and tears to the faces of the Donato couple, detained since May 1 for their alleged participation in the siege of Malacañang by pro-Estrada demonstrators.

During the police dispersal of the rampaging mob, more than a hundred demonstrators were arrested and detained at the WPD and at Camp Crame.

For the first time since their arrest, the Donatos saw their children Mary Grace, 9, Robert, 7, Gilbert, 6, and Jobert, 3, yesterday morning. The children have been under the care of Norberto's brother, Noel, for the past week.

"I told them not to cry because we will be home soon. I told them to be good always; that they don't give their uncle a headache," Rosalina said. The couple said they gave money to their children to pacify them.

MAMA/ A22

Cops call off manhunt for Ping, Gringo

By Christine Herrera,
Froilan Gallardo
and Jowel F. Canuday
PDI Mindanao Bureau

DIRECTOR General Leandro Mendoza, chief of the Philippine National Police, yesterday recalled the order for a nationwide hunt for alleged coup plotters Sen. Gregorio Honasan and ex-PNP chief Panfilo Lacson.

Mendoza said the authority of law enforcers to arrest without warrants the two suspected "ringleaders" of the coup attempt was rescinded, and their tag as "fugitives" and "wanted by the police" was withdrawn.

He issued the recall order during a command conference in Cagayan de Oro, after a panel of legal experts recommended that the PNP secure arrest warrants from the courts following President Macapagal-Arroyo's lifting of her declaration of a state of rebellion that contained the "continuing rebellion" clause.

In Cagayan de Oro City, Senate President Aquilino Pimentel said Honasan had agreed to

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VARIATIONS on a theme of rebellion: Truth in advertising? Or truth in the gutter, as the Puwersa ng Masa claims? FILMGRAB FROM GMA-7

Gloria: Pull out negative ads, it is time for healing

By Martin P. Marfil,
Christine Avendaño,
Yolanda Fuertes
and Ma. Diosa Labiste

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo has asked the pro-administration "13-0 Movement" to pull out its negative television advertisement campaign against opposition senatorial candidates linked to the storming of Malacañang by supporters of jailed ousted President Joseph Estrada.

"To be quite frank, she doesn't like it," presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao said of the TV ads.

Tiglao said Ms Macapagal was opposed to the advertisements because "she wants the message now to be a time of healing and that this government should not be so combative."

He said Malacañang and the People Power Coalition (PPC) had no hand in the political ads. "These ads were put out by volunteer organizations," he said.

The TV ads showed opposition senatorial candidates, particularly reelectionist Senators Juan Ponce Enrile, Gregorio Honasan and Miriam Defensor-Santiago goading the supporters of Estrada to attack Malacañang. Another TV ad featured former Philippine National Police chief Panfilo "Ping" Lacson, also an opposition senatorial candidate.

The images of violence, juxtaposed with the senators' video clips, ended with a punch line "*Iboboto nyo pa ba sila* (Will you still vote for them)."

Enrile declared victory following Ms Macapagal's request to pull out the ads. "They reversed themselves," he said, claiming public distaste over the ad campaign.

From his detention center, Estrada said the negative TV ads "boomeranged" on Malacañang.

"Malacañang's sudden decision to pull out the negative ads must have been reached after it realized that instead of alienating the *masa*, the ads have all the more solidified their votes for the candidates of Puwersa ng Masa," Estrada said in a statement.

Ricardo Puno, a pro-Estrada senatorial candidate, also accused the PPC of masterminding the commercials. "This will backfire on them," he said over radio.

Puwersa claimed that P150 million from the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) was used to finance the negative ads.

It said the Commission on Elec-

GLORIA /A6

KARAPATAN NIYANG BUMOTO!

Erap can vote, says poll exec

By Cynthia Balana

FORMER President Joseph Estrada will be allowed to vote in the May 14 national and local elections in a polling precinct in San Juan as long as the military provides security escorts for the peaceful exercise of his right to vote.

The statement came from Commission on Elections Commissioner Luzviminda Tancangco who said that both the election laws and Comelec rules allow the former president to vote in his place of residence despite his detention on charges of economic plunder, a non-bailable offense.

"There are others who even get elected while in jail. So whether the former president will be allowed to vote or not depends on the military or the court," Tancangco said yesterday at the Bulung-Pulungan sa Philippine Plaza.

Estrada's lawyer, Raymond Fortun, said the former president will have to seek the permission of the Sandiganbayan in order to vote.

Mr. Estrada earlier expressed his desire to vote for all the senatorial candidates of the opposition while in detention.

The law provides that voters must cast their votes in their respective precincts in their area of residence.

But in the case of Mr. Estrada, Tancangco said that the military may make security adjustments in order to accommodate his desire to cast his vote either in the polling precinct or inside his detention house in Laguna.

Security problem

"I am not saying that the military should provide security arrangements. I am simply saying that he can vote and that under the law, he should cast his vote in the polling precinct," the commissioner said.

Asked if she foresees any security problems should Mr. Estrada insist on going to his polling precinct, Tancangco instead enumerated at least three major problems that may arise during the elections proper.

These are confusion of voters in the polling precincts which could result in fraud and disenfranchisement, long delays in the completion of the canvass of votes, and tension that may result from these.

Tancangco expected a heavy turnout of voters on May 14. She said that at least 95 percent voters' turnout had been recorded in past national elections and 60 to 65 percent in local and barangay elections.

As to complaints that the Comelec *en banc* has been in disarray because of Comelec Chairman Alfredo Benipayo's penchant to issue memoranda that could overturn *en banc* rulings, Tancangco said the matter was just part of "differences in opinion" which were just normal in any collegial body requiring *en banc* decisions.

"I don't want to pin down the problem on anyone. But the Comelec chairman has to be like a father. There are differences of opinion when it comes to operation but it (Comelec) still operates," she said.

Voters profile

On the profile of voters, Tancangco said a majority belongs to the so-called C and D class or the masses but she could not say whether Metro Manila voters will go for opposition or administration senatorial bets.

"If we go by structure, it is pyramidical. The class C and D has greater say because they are the majority," she pointed out.

Also, there have been a tremendous increase in the number of illiterate voters in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

Independent senatorial candidate Orlando Mercado, who was also present in the forum, said it was difficult to predict how the voters would vote next week.

Mercado, a guest candidate of the opposition, said that even the surveys being conducted by independent pollsters could not establish the trend of the voting since the people always change their minds.

"It is not easy to predict because the results of the survey have been moving up and down. The trending is difficult to understand. It is not easy to form conventional wisdom here," he said.

But Mercado said he was confident that the opposition and the independent candidates would get at least six seats in the Senate.

At least 36.5 million voters will troop to the polls to elect 13 senators, party-list and district representatives in Congress, governors, vice governors, provincial board members, mayors, vice mayors and municipal councilors.

Tancangco said that while senatorial elections have less significance than the presidential and vice presidential elections in terms of getting voters' interest, she said that this year's political events which led to the downfall of Mr. Estrada and eventually to the bloody event in Mendiola have put added significance to this event.

Jimpol pleads not guilty at Sandigan

By Volt Contreras

FORMER Secretary Jaime Policarpio, accused of taking a monthly cut from gambling bribes allegedly collected by deposed President Joseph Estrada, pleaded not guilty at the Sandiganbayan yesterday before his former law professor, Presiding Justice Francis Garchitorena.

The magistrate, who chairs the anti-graft court's 1st Division, volunteered that Policarpio was once his student in, "of all subjects, criminal law" in Ateneo de Manila.

Garchitorena brought it up early in the arraignment proceedings to see if the defense counsels or the prosecutors would now have reservations about his continued handling of the case. Neither side aired any.

Policarpio, former chief of the Presidential Legislative Liaison Office, was the first to be arraigned among the persons affiliated with the ousted president who were charged by the Ombudsman following People Power 2.

Garchitorena quizzed the prosecutors mainly on the nature of the case they filed against his former student, "indirect bribery."

He asked state prosecutors, represented by Victor Tabanguil, to explain why, in the information they filed April 4, they accused Policarpio as having taken his "share" in jueteng bribes through Estrada's pal-turned-nemesis, Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson.

Tabanguil failed to give a satisfactory answer to the justice especially when asked why Policarpio was the lone accused in Criminal Case No. 26566 though the term "share" suggested that there were others who had benefited from the alleged gambling *payola*.

"We don't ask questions like that to waste your (prosecutors') time," said the justice in his trademark bluntness, which shows each time he chides government lawyers who come to hearings apparently unprepared.

Tabanguil was ordered to relay Garchitorena's clarificatory questions to his superiors, mainly to Ombudsman Aniano Desierto, who himself had earned the justice's ire for pulling out five of the eight original criminal cases the Ombudsman filed against Estrada et al.

Policarpio immediately left the courthouse and refused interviews after his arraignment. He is currently out on a P6,000 bail.

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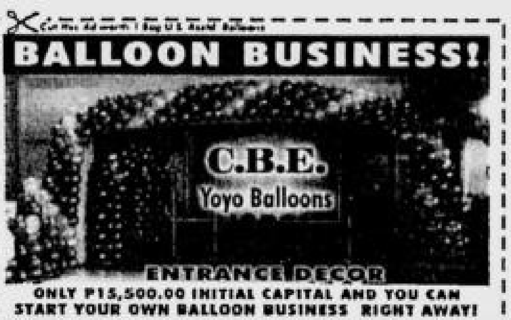

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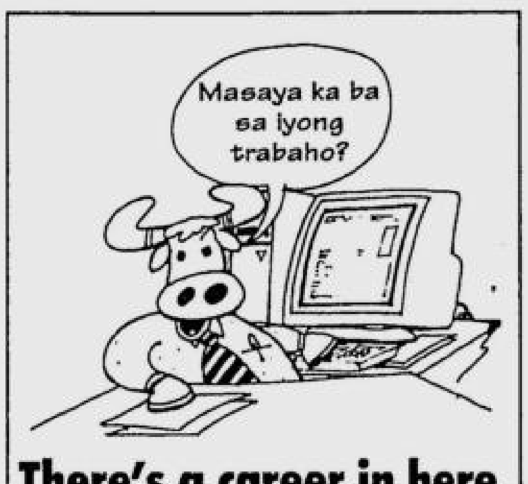
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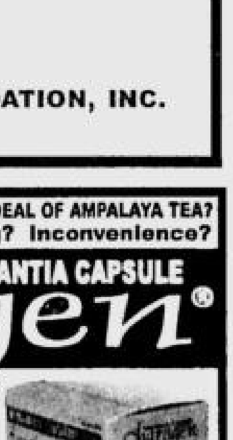

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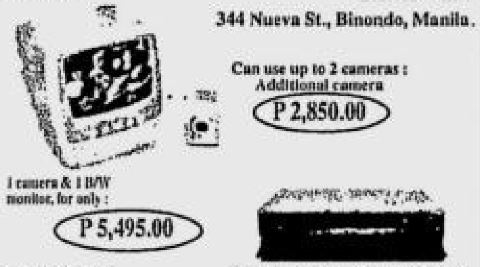

Gloria faces more challenges, warns Villar

SANTIAGO, Isabela—President Macapagal-Arroyo still faces formidable challenges ahead even with the quelling of the rebellion in Metro Manila but she has the advantage of the experience of the much destabilized Aquino presidency, senatorial candidate Manuel Villar said Monday.

In the aftermath of the failed bid to seize power by supporters of deposed President Joseph Estrada, the President is confronted with a "divided nation" and a weak economy, both of which are "ingredients of instability," said Villar, a candidate of the pro-administration People Power Coalition.

"She (the President) has a very tough task ahead of her (but) she has the benefit of the lessons of the Cory administration," Villar told reporters.

But he said Ms Macapagal had an edge over Aquino.

For one, the situation in the country today is not as grave as that prevailing during the time of Aquino who had to beat off several bloody coup attempts.

For another, Ms Macapagal is a seasoned politician, said Villar.

"At least she knows what she should do," he said.

Aquino, the widow of martyred opposition leader Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr., was a largely reluctant politician, having been installed in power after the people power uprising that toppled the regime of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

Christine Avendaño

Appointment of poll execs questioned

PHILIPPINE Constitution Association (Philconsa) president and senatorial candidate Camilo Sabio yesterday said the appointments of Commission on Elections chair Alfredo Benipayo and two Comelec commissioners were unconstitutional.

Sabio said the *ad interim* appointments of Benipayo and Commissioners Resurreccion Borra and Florentino Tuason Jr. violate the Constitution because the law prohibits appointments on a temporary or acting capacity.

Sabio urged the Supreme Court to immediately act on his petition asking the three Comelec officials to refrain from further performing their functions. He said preventing them from sitting in the Comelec would not paralyze the elections body because the remaining four duly appointed commissioners would still constitute the majority of its membership.

Macapagal visits Ka Erdie

MANALO

MALACAÑANG has confirmed that President Macapagal-Arroyo called on Iglesia ni Cristo head Eraño Manalo at the INC central office early yesterday, but refused to disclose the reason for or the outcome of the unannounced visit.

"I'm not at liberty to disclose that," Presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao said.

"It's a very private affair between Ka Erdie and the President, it was a personal meeting," said Tiglao.

He said Ms Macapagal would have to get Manalo's permission before she can reveal what happened during the visit which occurred a week after angry supporters of jailed former President Estrada stormed Malacañang.

The visit was not on the President's schedule, which included a meeting with another religious group, the Iglesia Filipina Independiente's supreme council of bishops.

The IFI meeting was held at 3 p.m. at the Palace's state dining room.

The INC visit was kept under wraps and was only revealed when a reporter of the INC-run Net 25 asked Tiglao about it during a press briefing.

Interior Secretary Jose Lina and National Security Adviser Roilo Golez were supposed to have accompanied the President to the meeting which began at 8.30 a.m. and lasted for 30 minutes.

A day before the May 1 attack on Malacañang, the President had sent emissaries to Manalo to convince the INC leader to recall the sect's members who are believed to have made up the bulk of the pro-Estrada protesters at Edsa.

It is believed that the INC's cooperation helped turn the tide in favor of the government in the week-long crisis.

The indigenous Christian sect is considered to have political clout because its members are said to vote according to their leaders' bidding. The INC hierarchy announces the candidates it chooses to endorse about two to three days before election day.

Juliet Labog-Javellana

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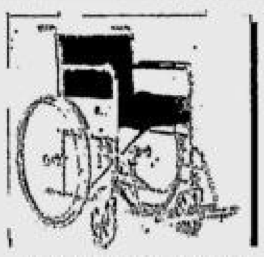

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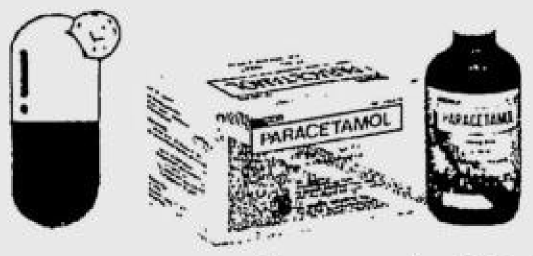

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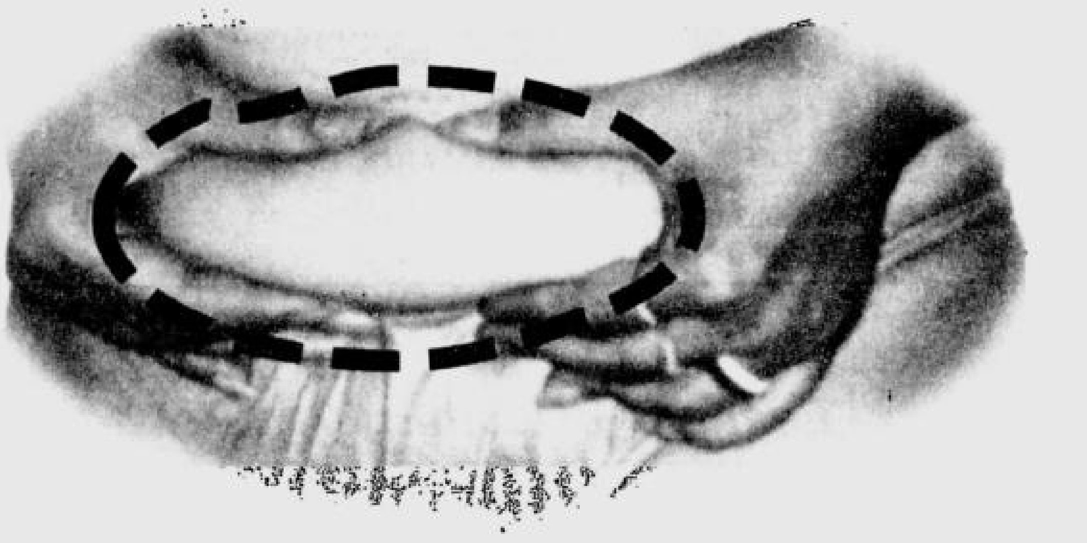

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Puwersa makes up for lost time

OPPOSITION senatorial candidates will try to make up for lost time by going on a whirlwind sortie that will take them to at least five provinces in the final four days of the campaign.

The Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino-Puwersa ng Masa said the candidates are scheduled to hold rallies in Tuguegarao City, Santiago City and Cauayan, Isabela today.

They will fly back to Manila in the evening to attend local proclamation rallies.

Then tomorrow, the candidates are scheduled to fly to Tagbilaran City, Cebu City and Bacolod City and head back to Manila again in the evening.

The opposition ticket dropped all campaign plans starting April 26 when supporters of ousted President Joseph Estrada began their six-day vigil at the Edsa Shrine in protest of their idol's arrest.

When the protest action ended in the disastrous May 1 siege at Malacañang, the candidates wanted to pick up the campaign trail but four of them—Juan Ponce Enrile, Gregorio Honasan, Miriam Defensor-Santiago and Panfilo Lacson—were ordered arrested for allegedly instigating the siege.

LDP spokesman Demaree Raval in an interview said they were supposed to campaign in these places if they were not sidelined by the above events.

"We have to consolidate our votes, and we have not been to these places such as Cagayan as a party. We have not been able to campaign for a week. *Na-diskaril ang* schedule *namin*," he said.

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2. KIKO PANGILINAN
3. MONSOD
4. OBET
5. CHATO
6. HERRERA
7. VILLAR
8. MAGSAYSAY
9. RECTO
10. OSMEÑA
11. ARROYO
12. DRILON
13. FLAVIER

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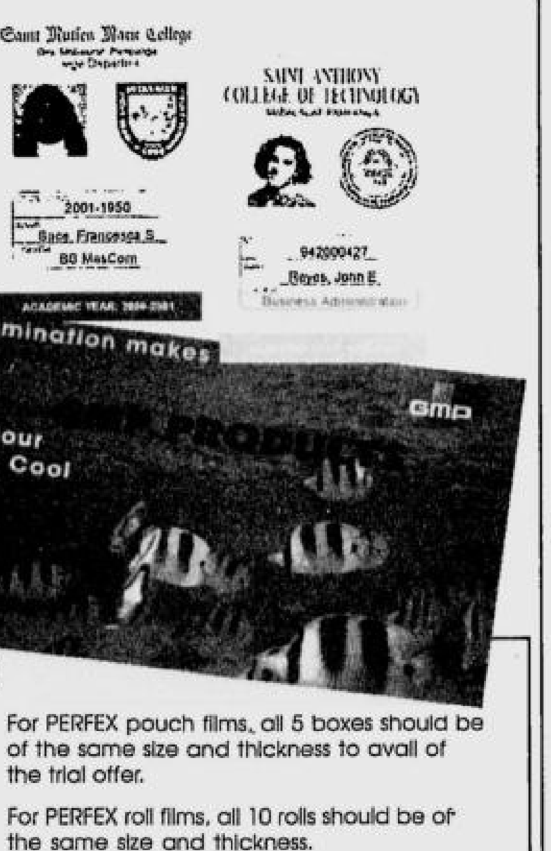

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Angara: Rare figure in politics

OPPOSITION senatorial candidate Edgardo Angara would rather not deliver the soundbite for the day. Even if it were some sizzling and quotable quotation laced with fire and brimstone.

He prefers to leave that practice to others, the quest for instant fame via the choicest statements over prime time news.

In a political milieu of debaters and bombast, Angara's political style has defied the norms. Friends jokingly say he sticks out like a sore thumb in a political context of fiery politicians.

But many in the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino—Puwersa ng Masa, (LDP-Puwersa) believes that Philippine politics is mature and sophisticated enough for the likes of Angara.

ANGARA

"We see the dawning of a type of politics and realizing the depth of the national problems. Then, we analyze what can be done, what should be done and how to do it," said Makati City Rep. Agapito Aquino, LDP secretary general and a supporter of Angara.

Angara's approach to nagging national problems also makes him a rare figure in Philippine politics, according to his supporters.

For example, on the issue of agricultural modernization, instead of preparing something passable and good enough, he opted for a comprehensive legislative measure as the rescue package. In 1998, he was the main man behind the passage of the Agriculture and Fisheries Modernization Act. (AFMA), which, since that year, has been the blueprint for agriculture and fisheries modernization.

Implementing that program himself as agriculture secretary from 1999 to 2000, Angara presided over a dramatic rebound of the sector which recorded an embarrassing negative 6.6 growth rate in 1998.

The crafting of solutions to the deep and nagging problems of basic education remains a class act in the annals of policy-making—courtesy of Angara.

First, he passed laws that restructured the Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS) so it can truly focus on basic education. The Commission on Higher Education and the Technical Education and Skills and Development Authority were finally out of the turf of the DECS.

Then, he worked for the passage of the Free High School Act.

Angara was also the principal sponsor of the Government Assistance to Students and Teachers in Private Education, which is now a pillar of support to private education.

Low-key but effective work. Landmark legislation that empowers. What he has accomplished along these lines make up a long list. The Senior Citizens Act, the Magna Carta for Public Health Workers.

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Angara and several party associates agree that politics should be past the stage for hell-raising advocacies and statements tailored for their shock value.

The LDP—Puwersa has prepared a seven-point development agenda with agricultural modernization and rural development as centerpiece.

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Dong Puno cites need for strong opposition

THE AFTERMATH of the violent dispersal of protesters near Malacañang has underscored the urgent need for a strong, genuine opposition in Congress that would serve as the vanguard of constitutional democracy in the country, according to former Press Secretary and Presidential Spokesman Ricardo "Dong" Puno Jr.

Puno, a frontrunning senatorial candidate of the opposition Puwersa ng Masa-Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino (PnM-Laban) coalition, said that a formidable opposition in Congress will help maintain an effective check-and-balance system for good and clean governance, especially if the ruling party is beholden to the administration.

"The events of the past few days in which Filipinos witnessed the violent dispersal of their countrymen at Mendiola, the herding of hundreds of people without arrest warrants by policemen and soldiers into trucks which is reminiscent of the Marcos-style sona, the warrantless arrest orders issued against opposition leaders and the curtailment of the freedom of peaceful assembly all the more emphasize why we need a strong opposition in both the Senate and the House of Representatives," Puno said.

He said the victory of the opposition senatorial candidates in the May 14 elections will help ensure that the rights and freedoms of every Filipino under the Constitution are protected.

With the opposition serving as fiscalizers and constructive critics of Malacañang, the government will always be on its toes and would not be prone to committing abuses and graft and corruption, Puno noted.

Palace siege was 'heaven-sent,' says PPC

By C. Avendaño

CONCEPCION, Tarlac—The siege of Malacañang saved the day for the pro-administration People Power Coalition and will likely deliver the May 14 election to its senatorial candidates, PPC campaign director Paul Aquino said.

Aquino confidently told reporters that with the election less than a week away, things are looking very bright indeed for the PPC.

"As a campaign director, you always say we can do it (win 13-0). But now, one week before the elections, I can say it with conviction, we can do it," he told a press briefing on the 10th day of the PPC's 13-day cross-country "victory run."

Aquino said the coalition's improved prospects were the direct outcome of the Macapagal administration's successful handling of the bloody siege of Malacañang by supporters of deposed President Estrada that left six people dead and more than 100 injured.

He said the defusing of the crisis was "heaven-sent" and a "miracle" for the PPC senatorial campaign which had been sidelined by the furor over the arrest of Estrada whose followers started massing at the Edsa Shrine.

Up to that time, the PPC, which had just begun its 13-day victory run, had been getting a "good press," said Aquino.

"All of a sudden, public attention shifted to the arrest of Erap. In the next 3 to 4 days, it (the attention) was on the Edsa Shrine," Aquino said.

He said he had hoped that Estrada would be arrested after the campaign period but when it happened, the PPC had to make the best of the situation.

Then came the siege of Malacañang. Aquino said his "feeling" that the PPC would win with a "ceiling of 8-5" all but shattered that day.

But now, not only was the PPC campaign saved but the coalition may just end up sweeping the elections, he said.

Citing field reports that he has been getting, Aquino said local leaders, particularly in Mindanao, have switched to the PPC side "because the Mendiola incident was a turning point for them."

"If we (are able to) take Mindanao the way we'll take those places where we're strong (Metro Manila, Region 6 and 7, Caraga), and Mindanao will turn up something like Cebu, I think we'll make a clean sweep," Aquino said.

The PPC is now busy wrapping up the senatorial campaign, which ends at midnight of May 12.

The PPC victory run ends today in the Ilocos Sur bailiwick of Gov. Chavit Singson, the man who first raised the corruption charges against Estrada.

Tomorrow, the PPC will hold *miting de avance* (grand rallies) in various places, with some of its candidates heading for Samar and Cebu and others to Mindoro, Cavite and Laguna.

On Friday, some candidates will go on a "caravan on air" from Misamis Occidental to Davao City while others will hold a *miting de avance* in Bulacan and Pampanga.

On Saturday, the PPC will hold *miting de avance* in five key Metro Manila cities—Quezon City, San Juan, Mandaluyong, Pasig and Marikina—winding up the campaign with in a final one at the Edsa Shrine.

That will also mark the end of Aquino's job.

"My job as campaign director ends on midnight of Saturday," he said.

Bigkis Pinoy, a nongovernment organization, will take over the post-campaign job of monitoring the elections for the PPC.

PPC senatorial candidate Winnie Monsod with Samar High alumni.

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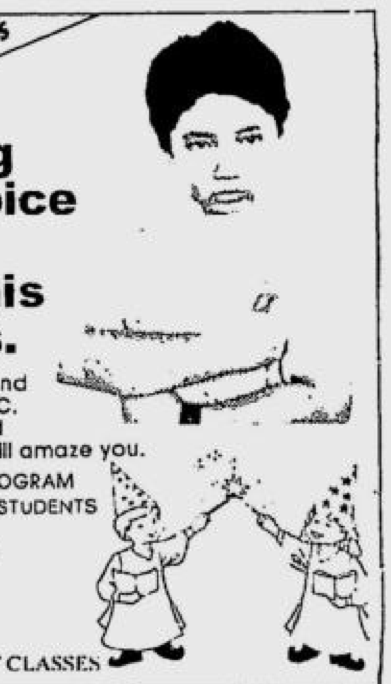

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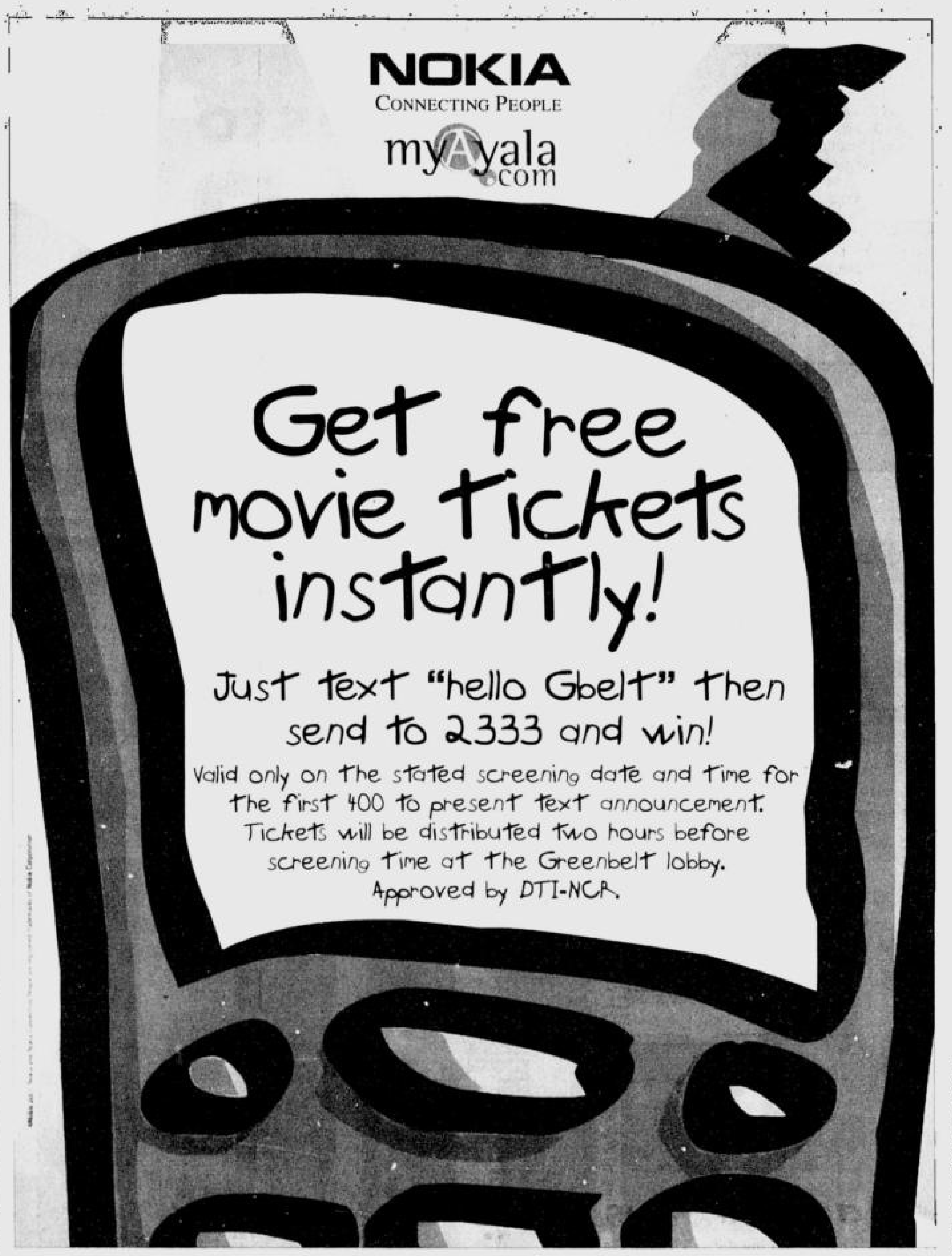

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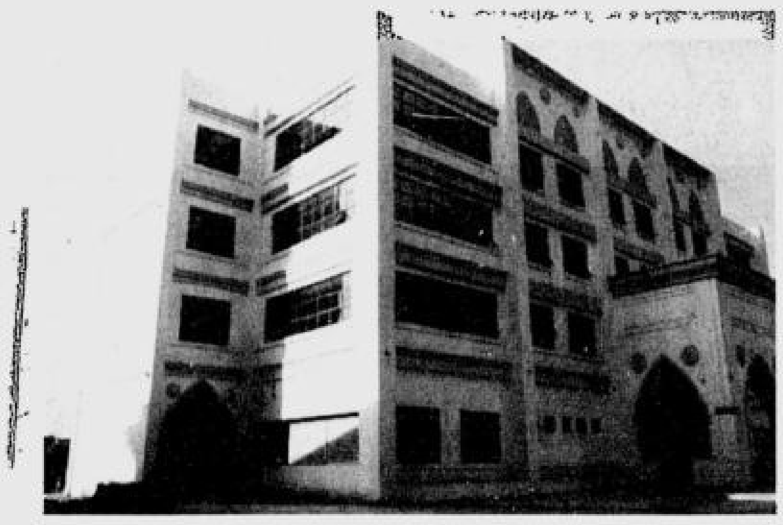

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Comelec: We haven't received any complaint

BY GERALD G. LACUARTA

THE COMMISSION on Elections cannot stop the airing of negative political TV ads against four opposition senatorial candidates.

Comelec Chair Alfredo Benipayo said any of the aggrieved parties must file a complaint with the Comelec before it could conduct a preliminary investigation of the alleged violations of the Omnibus Election Code or the Fair Elections Act.

"We haven't received any complaint regarding that," Benipayo said.

The Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino and the Puwersa ng Masa asked the Comelec to stop the airing of the ads, which allegedly violated the "provisions on truth in advertising standards that is a hallmark of the Fair Elections Act."

Comelec Commissioner Rex Borra said the opposition could seek relief under the Omnibus Election Code, which prohibits any political party or candidate from waging a campaign using malicious, scurrilous and libelous language.

The Fair Elections Act provides that in case of misleading or derogatory campaign propaganda, the aggrieved party or candidate has the opportunity to use the same media to make any correction, clarification or rectification.

The same law, however, allows propaganda materials and advertisement for or against candidates as long as the group or person, who paid for the advertisement, is identified in the material.

"If there is anybody prejudiced by the black propaganda, they can always complain to the Comelec and we can conduct preliminary investigation if there is really a violation of the provisions of the Omnibus Election Code and Fair Elections Act," Borra said.

But Education Secretary Raul Roco, a sponsor of the Fair Elections Act in the Senate, said any of the opposition candidates, who felt offended by the advertisements, could ask for the same time and exposure in the same media where the advertisements were aired or printed.

"The Fair Elections Act is equal opportunity and under the law they can ask for equal time," Roco said in a news conference after the signing of an agreement with Benipayo on teachers' poll duty on May 14.

Roco, however, said the parties who felt aggrieved by the advertisements must take the initiative to seek relief.

"We must leave the candidate to decide," Roco said. "The Comelec can't take the cudgels for them."

"If the candidate doesn't raise a howl, why should the Comelec?" Roco said. *With a report from Marionne Acabado*

Gloria asks . . .

(From page A1)

tions (Comelec) should stop the airing of the ads as these violated the Fair Elections Act. Puwersa also asked the poll body to investigate the possible misuse of PCSO funds.

Newspaper ads

The TV ads were followed yesterday by full-page advertisements in major newspapers that showed rioting mobs, wrecked cars and injured people—scenes from the May 1 violent storming of the presidential palace by thousands of Estrada supporters seeking to oust Ms Macapagal.

The advertisements accuse the Estrada candidates of instigating the riot, ending with the remark: "Are you happy now, power grabber?"

In Iloilo City, opposition senatorial candidate Edgardo Angara said he had instructed lawyers to file with the Comelec a complaint against "unfair" campaign advertisements by the pro-administration 13-0 Movement.

He said he would question before the Comelec the basis of the negative TV ads.

But Dodi Limcaoco, campaign manager for the PPC, asserted that the advertisements were legal under election rules.

"This country's politics has gone to the gutter. The administration has this dangerous tendency to do things in excess," said Angara, adding that the expensive ads also showed the abuse of money and power.

Tiglao said the political ads against opposition senatorial candidates were not black propaganda.

"By black propaganda, you define it as total lies. But this one, they're just playing video tapes and asking some questions," he said.

Beaten to the draw

PPC reelectionist Sen. Juan Flavier said it was understandable that the opposition candidates would cry foul over the TV ads.

"It's part of the game. *Naunahan sila* (They were beaten to the draw). But if they were in our place, they would produce similar ads against us and we would be crying black propaganda. The opposition must not take it against us," Flavier said in Urdaneta City.

Francisco Pangilinan, another PPC senatorial candidate, said that while the ads could have hurt the opposition candidates, the people would know whether the information contained in the ads was based on truth.

"Was the truth twisted? If not, it's not black propaganda. People should ask themselves if the ads are true or not based on their own appreciation," Pangilinan said.

The controversial campaign ads against opposition candidates were factual, timely and in favor of the PPC senatorial campaign, according to PPC campaign director Paul Aquino.

"I don't think they (ads) said anything that's not true. ...So more power to the 13-0 Movement," Aquino told reporters after a PPC rally in Concepcion, Tarlac.

Teddy Lopez, PPC media coordinator and a member of Kompil, one of the groups in the 13-0 Movement, said the idea of the campaign ads was to "raise the awareness level of the people regarding the leadership qualities and actuation of certain candidates." *With a report from Dona Pazzibugan*

Sandigan clears Ping's accuser

BY VOLT CONTRERAS

THE SANDIGANBAYAN yesterday cleared of grave coercion charges a police colonel who just before the 1998 presidential elections exposed the illegal wiretapping activities allegedly conducted by former national police chief Panfilo Lacson, now an opposition senatorial candidate.

The acquittal could result in the revival of wiretapping charges against Lacson, who is also facing charges of rebellion arising from the bloody siege of Malacañang by followers of ousted President Estrada on May 1.

Acquitted by the anti-graft court's 4th Division was Senior Supt. Eduardo Matillano, Lacson's fellow officer at the defunct Presidential Anti-Crime Commission (PACC), a super anti-crime body headed by then Vice President Estrada.

The court noted that the complainant, a janitor in Lacson's PACC office, was merely "caught in the crossfire" arising from the "professional jealousy" between the two police officers.

Matillano's co-accused, colleague Supt. Efren Valeriano, was also cleared. The two were allowed to post bail while a third respondent known only as "Bogs" remained at large during the trial.

In a radio report, Matillano's counsel Bonifacio Alentajan was quoted as saying that his client's acquittal could spur the revival of the wiretapping charges earlier filed by Matillano against Lacson before the Ombudsman.

Matillano was at that time the head of the PACC's Task Force Amihan while Lacson, a colonel, led TF Habagat.

Lacson was later appointed chief of the Philippine National Police after Estrada became President.

The case stemmed from Matillano's accidental discovery on May 5, 1998 of what he said were wiretapping devices and several unlicensed firearms at the Camp Crame office of Special Project Alpha, of which Lacson was one of the leaders.

The court noted that Matillano and his co-accused conducted the raid on the SPA office, photographed the devices and the guns, and had the office padlocked and placed under guard.

They then got the TF Habagat's utility boy, David Sadaya, to execute two sworn statements attesting to the conduct of the raid.

Sadaya, however, would later sue Matillano and the other raiders for grave coercion, claiming he had been forced and intimidated into signing the sworn statements. The Ombudsman gave credence to the complaint and elevated it to the Sandiganbayan.

In acquitting Matillano et. al., the Sandiganbayan said the raid had been perfectly legal since no search warrants were required if the target was a government office.

It also noted that the prosecution, throughout the trial, did not enter any evidence rebutting Matillano's claim that the SPA had engaged in wiretapping.

MATILLANO

Comelec hikes teachers' poll duty allowance

BY G. LACUARTA

MONEY, safety and security will be the least of the problems of the estimated 480,000 public schoolteachers enlisted for poll duty on May 14 with the Commission on Elections and the education department agreeing to increase allowances, grant insurance benefits and provide a security detail for them.

Comelec chair Alfredo Benipayo and Education Secretary Raul Roco yesterday signed an agreement that provides that teachers and other education personnel called to election duty would receive a per diem of P900 for every day of service.

The Comelec earlier increased the teachers' per diem to P800, doubling the amount paid out in the 1998 elections. But Roco asked that it be increased to P1,000, resulting in a compromise figure of P900.

"We were hoping for P1,000 but we understand the constraints," said Roco at a news conference at the Comelec.

He said that now the teachers serving in the Board of Election Inspectors would no longer be at the mercy of candidates and politicians.

The P900 is to be paid out in cash as soon as the teachers secure the ballot boxes, with the balance to be given upon submission of the ballot box and various election paraphernalia.

The Comelec has also granted an in-house insurance package with a maximum coverage of P100,000 for election-related injury, sickness or death "in the manner allowed by law."

Benipayo said authorities recognize that teachers and other education personnel could be injured or fall sick "or be the subject of harassment or even die in the performance of their election duties."

The Comelec has also agreed to provide security for those in service areas with peace and order problems.

The Department of Education, Culture and Sports will grant a five-day leave credit for each day of election duty.

The DECS will also extend legal assistance to any BEI member or DECS personnel charged with criminal and administrative cases in connection with their performance of election duties.

Roco said the DECS Central Office would be requiring BEI chairs to submit the original copy of the certificate of votes and to retain a second copy in his or her possession. *With a report from Marie Carisa Ordinario*

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EDITORIALS

Killing season

THE MURDER of Tanauan City Mayor Cesar Platon in Tuy, Batangas, Monday has brought to the fore the grim possibility that this year's elections may yet be the bloodiest in living memory. Platon, the Lakas-NUCD candidate for Batangas governor, was buying popcorn at the town plaza after delivering a campaign speech at around 2 a.m. when a lone gunman shot him in the head with a .45-caliber pistol. As Platon fell, the assassin fired three more shots to his head to make sure he was dead.

The New People's Army immediately claimed responsibility for Platon's killing. The three-time city mayor had "a long list of criminal cases against the people," a spokesperson for the NPA's Melito Glor Command said in a statement sent to the media. He said a "people's court" had found Platon guilty of various crimes, including gun running, human rights violations and protecting drug syndicates.

At the beginning of the election season, the NPA said it would collect fees from candidates who wanted to campaign in the areas where it was operating. It has also announced that despite ongoing peace talks between the government and the National Democratic Front, there would be no let-up in its attacks on government forces and abusive government officials.

Platon's family and political allies are unconvinced that he was liquidated by the NPA. Former Vice President Salvador Laurel said Platon was a "devoted and effective public servant." Platon's widow Bhess, who is running for Tanauan mayor, said their family never got any death threats from the communist rebel group.

Whoever carried out Platon's execution, the fact remains that this electoral campaign has become a season for killing. Platon was just the latest and the most prominent victim of violence. Late last month, Vice Mayor Jose Cardenas of Canlaon City in Negros Oriental and four of his companions were killed in an ambush after holding a campaign rally in a mountain village. Five others were wounded in the attack. On May 2, the wife of a city councilor, and four others were killed in another ambush in Calbayog City.

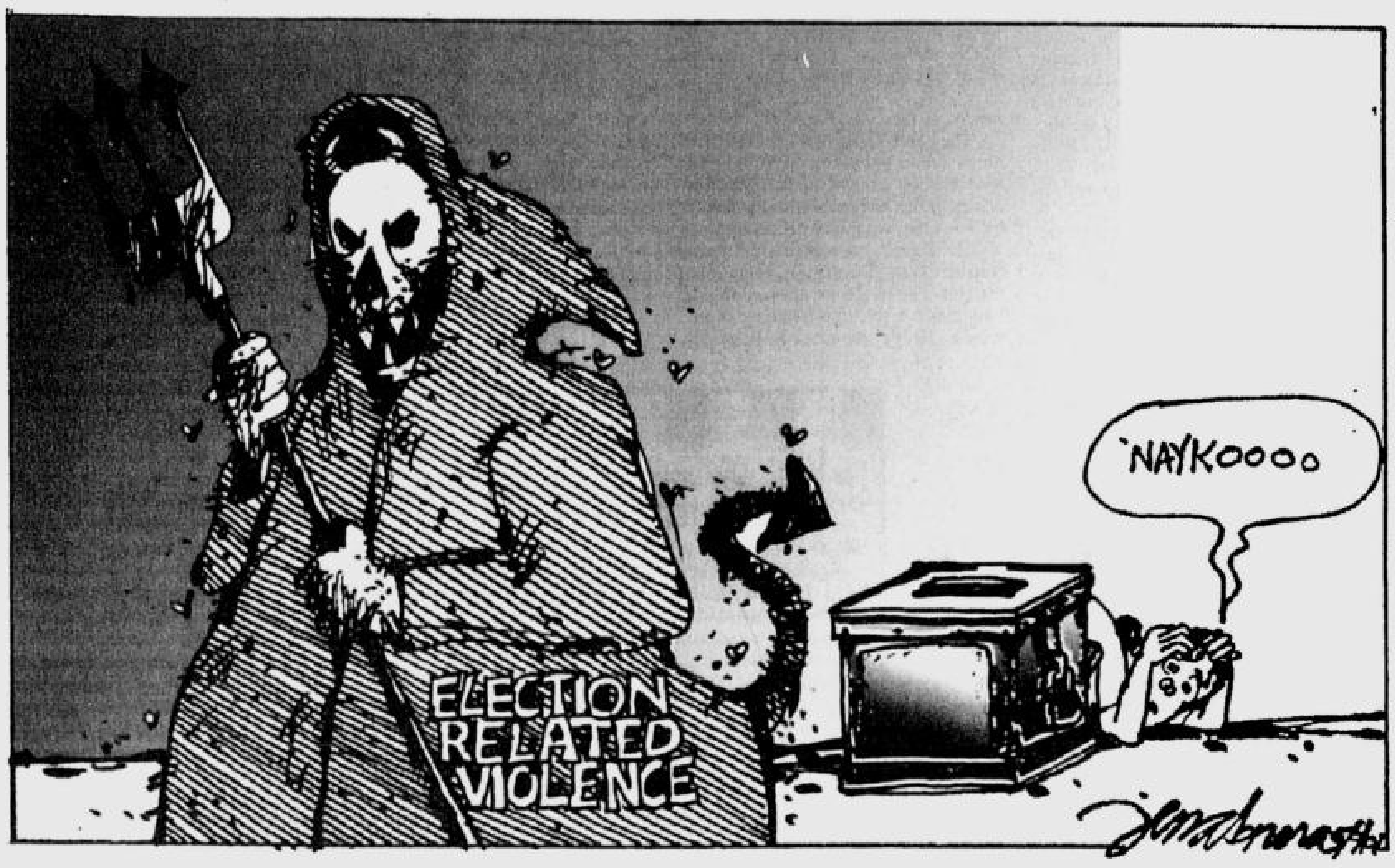
As of May 7, a total of 38 persons have been killed and 54 have been wounded in 53 violent incidents related to the elections, according to the Philippine National Police. In the run-up to the 1995 elections, 42 persons were reported killed and 34 were wounded. In the 1998 elections, the number of fatalities went down to 38—and that count was for the entire election period, from the start of the campaign to the counting of votes and the proclamation of the winners.

With the elections less than a week away, it doesn't require a crystal ball to see violence escalating in the days ahead. Reports about election-related violence show an increasing use of small private armies to eliminate not only political foes but also their supporters. In the Canlaon ambush, for instance, initial reports said as many as 40 armed men took part, although a police investigator later said only a dozen armed men were involved. About 15 men staged the Calbayog ambush, according to the police who counted 59 spent shells at the scene.

Veritable army

THE COMMISSION on Elections has already classified 29 out of the country's 78 provinces as "critical areas" which it may have to put under its control during the elections. But the Comelec is hardly helping the cause of peaceful elections with some of its own decisions. Thanks to the poll body, there is a veritable army out there with the potential to make trouble during the elections. The Comelec, which is supposed to regulate the carrying of firearms precisely to prevent bloodshed, has exempted from the gun ban a total of 18,679 individuals. Their number is more than one-tenth of the entire police force. And the Comelec has allowed them to tote their firearms despite observations made by the police that the gun ban has proven effective in bringing down the incidence of violence.

Now an already undermanned police will have to be on the lookout not only for rebels and guns for hire but also licensed gun holders who might create trouble in the heat of some close political contests.



The most incompetent and negligent Comelec

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

THE FIRST impression any person gets upon arriving in Manila is how dirty it is with the posters of candidates dirtying up walls, lampposts, street dividers and even trees. And the first conclusion one makes is that it is because we have the most inefficient, incompetent and negligent Commission on Elections in history.

It was the Comelec that issued rules to implement a law regulating the sizes of posters and the common poster areas. Candidates are now violating these rules with impunity, making the whole country unsightly, but the Comelec behaves as if it is blind. Comelec commissioners cannot help but see those illegal posters when they are driven every day in their limousines to and from their homes and offices. But not a peep out of them. Not any warning or even comment.

Look how impudently candidates violate the law and how the Comelec pretends not to notice. The giant billboards are allowed by law for the headquarters of candidates. But these big billboards, with the word "headquarters" printed on top, are placed not on any office or headquarters but on blank walls, on empty lots, and other places any fool can see is not an office or headquarters. One of Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago's billboards is on the side of a decrepit building in Quiapo that used to display movie billboards. A Noli de Castro "headquarters" billboard is placed on a lamppost on Edsa. Manny Villar's "headquarters" billboard is in the middle of a field, very visible to motorists, but otherwise empty.

Anybody can see—except perhaps the Comelec commissioners—that these places are not the headquarters of the candidates and that the word "headquarters" was placed on the billboard merely to give the appearance of fulfilling the requirements of the law. But it is plain to anybody except the Comelec that this is a violation. Yet we don't hear a peep of protest or warning from our honorable Comelec commissioners.

Because almost all candidates are doing it, it has been said that if the Comelec were to enforce the law, nobody would be left to run for office. But wouldn't it be better to disqualify all the violators and have the few poor candidates obeying the law run unopposed, instead of allowing law violators to get away with murder? Wouldn't it deliver the message that it doesn't pay to violate the law? Anybody, what we need are fewer senators, congressmen, provincial board members and councilors, not more of them. What they do is merely pass so many legislations that people disobey, thus cultivating a culture of disobedience.

But more congressmen we will certainly have because of the party-list system. The party-list system was set up to give the marginalized sectors of society such as farmers, laborers, ethnic tribes, etc. representation in Congress. In accrediting party lists, the Comelec could have exercised more care in seeing to it that the intent of the Constitution is achieved. It could have scrutinized the party lists more carefully and accredited only those that embody the constitutional intent. But what did the Comelec do? It threw the party-list system wide open to any Tom, Dick and Harry who can think of a party name. The same elite, powerful and influential characters are running in the party lists. Regular political parties like Lakas, Liberal Party and Aksyon Demokratiko, etc. are running in the party-list system. Where are the marginalized sectors there? Some candidates are running both in the regular party tickets and in the party lists. If they don't win in one, they can win in the other. Can they do that? Can they really have it both ways?

Many so-called parties are really one-man parties registered only to allow that man to run for public office in the party-list system. Some parties are mere letters in the alphabet. This has made the party-list system and the elections a farce. All because we have a bunch of incompetents in the Comelec.

If the Comelec cannot implement the party-list system as conceived by the Constitution and enforce the rules on posters, we might as well scrap them in the 2004 elections.

* * *

This piece of information should warm the heart of Pangasinan congressional candidate (and Speaker again wannabe) Jose de Venecia:

Filipinos in North America are grateful for the last act of then Speaker De Venecia in 1998 which exempted them and all overseas Filipino workers in the Middle East, Asia and Europe from paying income taxes to the Philippine government, considering that OFWs already remit more than $8 million to the Philippines every year.

OFWs already pay income taxes to the governments of the countries they work in. If they still pay income tax to the Philippines, that would be against the principle of double taxation.

Since De Venecia conceived the dollar remittance program for OFWs in 1967, our Bangko Sentral has earned more than $60 billion from OFWs, which provided safety nets for the Philippines during the Marcos martial law years, during the coup attempts against the Aquino administration, and during the Asian financial crisis under Ramos.

I am personally against, however, to two other De Venecia proposals: the double-citizenship formula for Filipinos, and the absentee voting system for OFWs.

Myths

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

HOW powerful are myths in Philippine politics?

Somebody asked me that question last week. Well, if we define "myth" not as something false or illusory, which is the way that word is popularly understood, but as a way of explaining the origin of things through images, symbols and stories, which is the way sociologists and psychologists define it, then it is an extremely powerful element in Philippine politics. It may even be a decisive element in it, as it is in most aspects of Philippine life.

The country's most popular presidents were the product of myth. There have been four of them, two having already gone to take part in the Great Story in the Sky, and two still very much among us, taking part in the not-always-very-great melodrama on earth. They are Ramon Magsaysay, Ferdinand Marcos, Corazon Aquino and Joseph Estrada. All of them are steeped, or writ large, in the myth—or to use a big word, the archetype—of the hero.

Magsaysay was the original "man of the masses," a charismatic person who might have been the first Filipino president to serve twice if he hadn't died in a plane crash shortly before the end of his first term in 1957. He came from humble origins, made even humbler by Reader's Digest and other American publications, which pitched in to sell him to a Filipino nation that had just come out of war and was being seduced by the Huks. And with no small help from Edward Lansdale, the American would-be Lawrence of Arabia, a CIA agent who engineered Magsaysay's rise to glory. Lansdale was eventually reassigned to Vietnam to duplicate his exploits in the Philippines, and failed miserably, becoming the inspiration for Graham Greene's novel, "The Quiet American."

But in the Philippines, his ploy would be hugely successful. Magsaysay became the mechanic who distinguished himself in war, waging an effective guerrilla campaign against the Japanese in Zambales. By 1953, he was the most popular figure in the country, which persuaded the Nacionalistas to pirate him from the Liberals, and to pit him against Elpidio Quirino. He buried his opponent in a landslide, or by a Lansdale, however you want to look at it. With the Americans behind him and with the Filipino masses throwing themselves at his feet, he broke the back of the Huks ere his term was up.

Marcos was, believe it or not, also popular in his time. Though he did not rout his opponent in the 1965 elections, who was Diosdado Macapagal, Gloria's father, he did beat him by a comfortable margin. He did so also by the myth of being a war hero. He got an American journalist, Hartzell Spence, to write his biography, or the legend in his mind, and Spence made him out in a potboiler titled, "For Every Tear, A Victory," to have won more medals than Audie Murphy, the American war hero Hollywood recruited to fight other wars. Macapagal himself made the mistake of banning the movie based on the book, "Tadhana," which had the effect of turning *masa* opinion against him. He tried to correct the mistake by relenting at the last minute, but too late.

With American help, Marcos and Imelda—who had also projected themselves as a tandem to their compatriots as the mythical Malakas at Maganda—won applause in the diplomatic community as the Philippine Jack and Jackie, who would preside over a Philippine Camelot. Marcos swiftly reciprocated by sending the Philcag, something he had vowed never to do—indeed had fiercely fought—when he was still a senator. Marcos won a second term against Serging Osmeña by making an issue of his presumed collaboration with the Japanese, also reviving in the process his image as a war hero. By then, however, the myth was clashing with the reality—this was the eve of the First Quarter Storm—and Marcos won only by an unprecedented use of guns, goons and gold. Three years later, he presided over the Philippine version of Dante's Inferno.

Cory, well, she was the Philippine Joan of Arc, a vision conjured also by the Americans. She was the innocent, unsophisticated, maid of Tarlac who stole the thunder from the Philippine dauphins and went on to liberate her country from tyrannical rule. Her appeal was not intrinsic, it was situational. She had been thrust into a historical context that resonated with the transcendental theme of good versus evil. And it drew tremendous emotional energy not just from public anger against Marcos' tyranny but from public sympathy for her lot: she had just lost a husband to that tyranny.

So long as she remains cast in that role, she is effective. Which was why she was effective in fighting Erap. But which is also why she wasn't so when she tried to raise people power against a Senate bent on ending the reign of the US bases. Her power draws from that storyline, not from personal charisma.

And Erap, well, his power owes not just to the movies but to the roles he has been playing in the movies. Or role, as they are just variations of Asiong Salonga, the rogue with the heart of gold, the poor boy toughened by adversity into using his wits and fists (with a wristband to boot!) to survive but refusing to go the route of crime, the *sanggano* who plucks himself out of the gutter and brings his loved ones to share his fate. How deep these images cut, well, *contravidas* have been stoned, heckled and threatened in this country. The public identifies nearly completely with its stars. With no small help from an industry that does nothing but build personas around their protégés.

Erap's myth itself has stood formidably against the battering ram of reality. As I keep saying, the poor's acceptance of Erap as one of their own despite his mansions and his bank accounts and his extravagant lifestyle deserves a library unto itself.

None of this is to say that we should admire and emulate all this. All of this is that we must learn to appreciate the power of myth and understand its language. Not all myths are bad, or untrue. There is much truth in the myth of Cory as Joan of Arc. And as I keep saying also, Edsa II was made possible not just by rational arguments, or legal gobbledygook, but by the morality play that was the impeachment trial that played out to us for months, a morality play that had heroes and villains, gods and monsters, salvation and damnation. We do not appreciate the power of myth and understand the language of myth, and others, the ones who know how to invent and manufacture the false or illusory variety, will use it for their own purposes.

Those who do not heed myth are doomed to relive it.

* * *

Comments are welcome at dequiros@ vasia.com

Why the May 1 attack on Malacañang?

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

WITH THE DEBATE over warrantless arrests and "state of rebellion" (now lifted) muddling the central issue of the May 1 attack on Malacañang, it becomes critically important to trace the event that triggered the rallies at Edsa, culminating in the storming of the Palace by deposed President Joseph Estrada's loyalists.

The purpose of this trace is to establish clarity in determining responsibility for inflaming the poor into a howling mob behind a cause that had absolutely nothing to do with alleviating their poverty. The attack did not serve the poor's class interests. It served the political interests of the rich and the privileged who incited them to violence.

The triggering event was the arrest of deposed President Estrada on 3:15 p.m. on April 25. The arrest order was issued by the Sandiganbayan, flowing from the plunder case filed against Estrada. A crowd of about 10,000 had thronged at North Greenhills on that day. At 11:15 a.m., when the sheriff went to 1 Polk St. to serve the warrant, 1,500 Estrada supporters had broken into the subdivision and battled police to prevent the arrest. It took four hours of negotiations between police officers and Estrada's lawyers before Estrada decided to go with the arresting officers.

A convoy of five vehicles took Estrada and Jinggoy Estrada to Camp Crame. More than 300 policemen, backed by Marine reinforcements, were deployed to carry out the arrest and clear the way for the convoy to pass. Estrada's lawyers have charged that there was an "excessive" deployment of police to execute the arrest. If the deployment was thinner, could Estrada been taken to Camp Crame? After the arrest, a mob of around 5,000 tried to rush to the gates of Camp Crame. The police and the mobs clashed. The throngs then moved to the Edsa Shrine, growing into more than 300,000 on April 30.

There is an evidence of recruitment of people from slum areas to block the arrest. But that's only part of the truth. A number also went there to express anger over the arrest of their own volition.

President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo said that the arrest was a "historic moment." Her spokesperson, Rigoberto Tiglao said, "We have shown that justice is working in the Philippines. We consider this a historic moment. We showed that a former highest official of the land could be answerable for his actions."

The government is right in the sense that for the first time, the Philippine state had the political will to arrest a former president to answer for wrongdoings in a serious criminal case (economic plunder) and implement the principle of impersonal justice. But the *masa* and even Estrada's lawyers, did not see it that way. To the *masa* the arrest was a case of harsh application of justice to Estrada. But the arrest came as a culture shock. We were not ready for an impersonal and equal execution of the law as a precondition to administering justice. The *masa* and the lawyers wanted him to be placed under house arrest and accorded privilege not available to the rest of us. It shocked them that Estrada was subjected to routine procedures of detention—fingerprinting and mug shots. Their demand seeks to place Estrada above the law and perpetuate an hierarchy of privilege. The poor were used for this.

The "historic moment" President Macapagal was talking about is not understood. It has in fact provoked hostile reaction because we have been used—all of us—to a social system where the rich can exploit us and get away with breaking the law while the poor occupy the bottom of the hierarchy. The poor are used to being vulnerable, manipulated, betrayed and treated unequally. They have been sensitized to accept their inferior status in life and powerlessness, and their place in the hierarchy. So when they see that their leader with whom they have identified their hopes for a better life is arrested, even though Estrada does not belong to their social class, they could not accept it. They could not accept the arrest because they are not accustomed to see someone with a higher status in life and power subjected to the indignity of an arrest. Indignity is only for the poor and powerless.

The reaction to the arrest of Estrada is like the reaction of peasants who at last were given land titles in land reform. Land reform did not make them economically independent of the landlords and politically independent citizens because they had been used to dependency on the landlords. When the landlords, from whom they borrowed loans for their daily needs, were gone, no support system replaced them. The state did not provide the financial and agricultural services to help the emancipated tenants make the land produce enough to make them economically independent citizens. So they sold the land back to the landlords in modern corporate farm schemes like Danding Cojuangco's estates in Negros Occidental.

Privilege for Estrada was the battle cry that drove the *masa* to Edsa. Estrada succeeded in identifying himself with the *masa's* aspirations but, in fact, he did nothing for them to rescue them from poverty. Estrada was their fictitious life raft. With his ouster, they lost a straw to clutch. That's why they went to Edsa to protest his arrest. Estrada hijacked the poor and their social grievances for his electoral mobilization, for his regime's survival and for his restoration. Estrada carved out too much of the social wealth for himself, and left little for distribution to the poor.

Estrada's heirs have again hijacked at Edsa the poor into a revolution in which they stood to gain nothing, except cash handouts. They mobilized the poor to be the battering ram in the attack on the Palace either to restore Estrada or to grab power themselves, and so the instigators have blood in their hands. The mobilizing issue was the arrest of Estrada and his ill-treatment. Its end was to seize power to install a cabal that has absolutely no vision for the redistribution of wealth. The attack incited by Estrada's heirs was a cynical call for privilege for the rich and the powerful. The attack was a collision between the principle of impersonal administration of justice and the notion of perpetuating privilege for a few.

Neighbor says: 'No to house arrest for Erap!'

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

MAJORITY of respondents in a recent survey allegedly favor "house arrest" for former President Estrada. They would prefer to see him ensconced in the comfort of his mansion in North Greenhills rather than in his also comfortable, though rather austere, quarters inside Fort Sto. Domingo.

I very much doubt, though, if Erap's neighbors in North Greenhills were among those surveyed. For if you'd ask them, I'm sure the majority would rise up and launch their own version of "People Power IV" rather than have Erap—and the horde of Erap fanatics—in their midst again.

A North Greenhills resident, living just a few houses from the Polk Street Ejercito-Estrada headquarters, recently told me what it was like to be living in North Greenhills at the time of the sympathy siege staged by Erap's followers.

It was bad enough that they, the legitimate homeowners, had to take a circuitous route to and from their homes, she said. But at the height of the protest, her three children, who study at the International School, had to get off at the Madison gate because their school bus could not get through. As the youngsters, the youngest of whom is only 6, entered the gate, they were jeered and sneered at by the angry protesters. "*Mamatay sana kayo* (I hope you all die)!" one of them shouted. "My youngest was traumatized," remarked the resident, who is, for your information, a Filipina whose husband works for a multinational firm.

At the time, her husband happened to be abroad, and so, fearing for their safety, the resident decided to pack up and leave their home. With her children, she holed up in a nearby hotel for a few days, missing the "action" just outside her gate. But the resident says she doesn't regret her decision. What she's really incensed about is that before leaving, she dropped by the North Greenhills Homeowners Association office to plead for extra protection for residents living near Polk Street. "There was only an OIC there and instead of listening to my complaint, he launched into an angry tirade about how Erap was being mistreated!"

So, house arrest for Erap? Not if Erap's neighbors can help it!

* * *

CONGRESSMAN and People Power Coalition senatorial candidate Wigberto "Bobby" Tañada, was a guest in a recent episode of "Paliwanagan" over Channel 13, hosted by Manny Guina and this columnist. From this close encounter, I can say I now understand what some people, including his sympathizers, mean when they comment that Tañada is not "sexy."

This is not meant to disparage his masculinity, mind. Only to point out that the congressman's usual approach to public declarations, which is a well-considered, well-thought out statement uttered soberly and with a careful choice of words, is hardly the stuff to set viewers afire. Personally, I much prefer this sort of behavior from public officials, since constant exposure to smooth-talking, schmoozing pols who can fire off self-confident (if often erroneous) declarations with hardly any prodding has turned me off the species. But in a heated campaign, voters need to be grabbed by the throat and the candidate's name and image crammed into their brains, the better to be remembered come voting time. At least, this is how conventional wisdom goes.

But I have serious reservations about choosing our future senators and officials based only on their "sexiness," "charisma" or "charm." Or on their popularity, looks and *simpatiko* personality. This is how we ended up with Ramon Revilla, Robert Jaworski, Tito Sotto and Gregorio Honasan at the impeachment trial. This is how we ended up with a president who systematically looted the treasury and fished in the rich waters of private business, banking on his popularity to shield him from criticism.

Besides, Tañada has his moments, too. I hope not too many have forgotten his speech at the opening of the impeachment trial where he explained the intricacies of the prosecution's case in elegant and flawless Filipino. Lawyers in the audience were most impressed by Joker Arroyo's presentation, but I was most moved by Tañada's speech. To me, it evoked the era when politics was the preserve of statesmen (and women), and discourse was conducted politely, though no less heatedly.

Tañada deserves to return to the Senate. If only to restore to the Senate dignity, civility and integrity, as well as the kind of nationalism and nationalist thought and action that springs from deep within, rather than from the fashions (and passions) of the day.

* * *

IF Bobby Tañada is hampered by a seeming lack of passion and oomph, the opposite, it seems, is the problem that "Mareng Winnie" Monsod confronts.

Friends tell me that in urban poor communities, where support for Erap runs strong, the women themselves say they won't vote for Mareng Winnie on the grounds that "*masyadong maanghang ang dila* (her tongue is much too spicy)."

Why, I thought that was a major part of Mareng Winnie's charm!

Here is one woman who has no problem speaking her mind, or phrasing her comments in the sharpest, most trenchant terms possible. If honesty, or frankness, is what we wanted in a senator, then Mareng Winnie has plenty of that and more.

But common folk apparently are uneasy when someone comes on too strong for their taste. Although I must wonder why Ma(i)d Miriam, whose sharp tongue has cut down many an opponent or critic, seems to have thrived on her "*mataray*" reputation.

Still, Mareng Winnie's camp seems to be heeding the negative comments. I've noticed an attempt to "soften" Mareng Winnie's image. Her latest posters depict her smiling pleasantly, a departure from the previous materials that showed her in the more familiar "combative" pose.

I like the "new" Mareng Winnie, but I prefer the old one even more. Here's hoping that when (not if) she steps into the Senate, it will be the feisty, barbed and bristling Mareng Winnie who will emerge and confound the unreconstructed *trapos* in the chamber.

Researching a history of Filipino food

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

WEEKEND before May 1 I was glued to the television watching history unfold. During boring moments I either went to the bathroom, kitchen, or rummaged through old files. Obviously, the last activity was most productive as I found random notes for columns tucked away in a drawer unopened in years. Reading these notes taken from prewar periodicals in the Lopez Memorial Museum made me realize I had enough to embark on a history of Philippine food.

Topics were diverse as the food served for the 1922 Malacañang reception for Edward, prince of Wales, long before he became king and abdicated to become the *sosyal* duke of Windsor. He is quoted to have said, "I will never forget the Philippines," in reference to a scar he received at the Manila Polo Club where he fell off a horse. In contrast, there seems to be no famous last words from the present prince of Wales, who visited Manila a few years ago. I remember the preparations for this visit because Prince Charles was to be presented with a Bohol tarsier. Naturally, this drew concern from the British Embassy not on ecological grounds, but rather they worried that the tarsier might bite the prince (or worse, pee on the royal coat) during the photo opportunity.

There were notes on Benjamin Mendoza who tried to stab Pope Paul VI at the Manila International Airport in 1970. Of course, I dug up the famous karate-chop Ferdinand Marcos is supposed to have given Mendoza that spared the pope's life. Actually, the pope was saved by a neck brace under his cloak.

While jotting down these notes, I would salivate when I saw illustrated ads for the La Patria bakeshop in 1926 that gave me a glimpse into the various breads and biscuits they had on sale called Maicena, La Patria, Corazon de Leon (lion heart-shaped), Galletas de patatas (potato biscuits that resemble today's soda crackers, these being square with holes), Media luna (half moon), Cariñosa, La Patria Oval, Asamblea, Paghahanapin, Gota de leche (drop of milk), Triangulo, Inang Bayan and more. Looking at these reminded me of the refrigerated pastry displays of Dulcinea today that have a smaller assortment with less imagination in names. Dulcinea has Borrachos (drunkards) and a black pastry called Negritos which I think are called "Filipinos" someplace else.

La Patria had a whole range of breads that I do not see these days: *pan de cacao, pan especial, pan de aleman, pan de aretes, pan de leche, pan de sal, pan navarro, pan de limon, pan de coco, pan de ates* and of course the house special *pan americano* better known today as "Tasty" or sliced bread. Curiously, the most vulgar looking bread was *pan de monja* (nun's bread) that anyone today would recognize as *monai*. *Ensaimada especial* was available and presumably regular *ensaimada* as well. One could, from this list alone, see the changing of the times, the changing of tastes, as the Filipino shifted from the difficulty of choosing from the Spanish breads and cookies and settled for "*pan americano.*" La Patria prided itself on being sanitary and modern, that their bread was cooked in a gas oven rather than the old-fashioned *pugon* or brick oven. In an English advertisement in 1928, La Patria claimed:

"American bread of La Patria made under a formula which costs thousands of pesos...some of the characteristics of La Patria are: Made of first-class materials only. Baked by gas stove which is the last word in modern bakery. Really expensive at that—which ensures uniform, thorough and sanitary baking; free from impurities which may be caused if baked under an ordinary stove where wood or mineral is used as fuel. We make and serve large order for hotels, restaurants, colleges, hospitals and dormitories."

These disjointed notes made sense in the light of an essay I wrote on the food served in Malolos on Sept. 29, 1898 to celebrate the ratification of the June 12, 1898 declaration of independence from Spain. This was an all-French menu and showed the Filipinos at the time showing the world that they were civilized and capable of self-government. It is significant that the founding fathers at Malolos ate French or at least French-style food, but why didn't they express their nationalism by serving *adobo, sinigang, tuyo* or *balut*? It took two decades for a change to take place. In May 1928, Dr. Dominador Gomez organized a banquet at the Manila Grand Opera house whose food was exclusively Filipino. An editorial in one of the newspapers said in part:

"...The idea of Sr. Gomez viewed from whatever angle, is an expression of eloquent Filipinism, of sincere nationalism, of genuine and open patriotism. The Filipino cooking has its exquisite creations of nutritive value which favorably compare with the dish[es] of other countries. Foreigners are not averse to products of our culinary art, and if they try the food in countries visited before they come to us, we see no reason to despise our own and to refuse to offer it to our visitors."

All this makes me wonder: When did the very first Filipino restaurant (not a *turo-turo*) open in the Philippines? When did we start to take pride in our own cuisine? Going through my notes made me realize I have a lifetime of research ahead of me.

* * *

Comments are welcome at ambeth@admu.edu.ph

San Juan citizens back good governance vs Estrada dynasty

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

YESTERDAY I detailed reports from the field about how money will be used in a massive way by candidates identified with the Estrada camp. This column calls it "Puwersa ng Kwarta" or PngK. In the senatorial race it has been noted by various political pundits that the moneyed candidates are all with the opposition, except for a few exceptions in the People Power Coalition. It's not difficult to believe this, for the opposition, until over 100 days ago, was in the saddle. At the local level, money remains the dominant factor and the administration ticket appears hard-pressed to meet the financial demands of its candidates.

* * *

One positive thing, however, is that the top leadership of Lakas, the linchpin of the PPC, President Macapagal and Vice President Guingona, are both said to be very much against using dirty money to fund the PPC campaign. In fact, reliable sources point out that one prominent Erap crony who is himself running for public office offered to fund the PPC campaign but Ms Macapagal thumbed it down. This is commendable as dirty money has a way of dirtying everyone. The Lakas-PPC ticket everywhere will just have to rely on their biggest asset—people power, an appeal to the voters to reject money politics. They could throw in too, prayer power.

* * *

In Quezon City it's a three-cornered fight between the leading contender, House Speaker and lead prosecutor Sonny "SB" Belmonte, Rep. Dante Liban and actor Rudy "Daboy" Fernandez. Belmonte remains the man to beat because of his solid record of achievements as well as his grass-roots organization, but Fernandez is gaining ground. Which is why Belmonte has to be helped by all decent Quezon City citizens. I believe Belmonte would make a very good mayor who would get Quezon's dream city going, finally. Fernandez is backed up by outgoing Mayor Mel Mathay who obviously doesn't want Belmonte to win, as he can't put SB under his thumb.

By the way, in case you haven't noticed, the Mathays are an entire dynasty. Both Mel and his son Chuck are running for the House in separate districts, and a nephew, Apet Mathay, is running for councilor. But apart from them, there is a candidate for councilor who only calls himself Tinee, the son of Mel Mathay's longtime mistress, Vilma Valera. Some dynasty indeed.

* * *

Estrada lead lawyer Rene Saguisag has been arguing before the Sandiganbayan for a house arrest for his client Estrada. To bolster his argument, Saguisag cites how his uncle, former Senate President Jovy Salonga was put under house arrest by the dictator Ferdinand Marcos even in the darkest hours of martial law. Saguisag is, of course, doing the job he was hired for, which is to get the optimum conditions for his client. But what Erap's lawyer does not point out, as Salonga himself pointed out over PTV-4 yesterday, was that there is a world of difference between his case and Estrada's.

Salonga said he was indeed allowed to be put under house arrest by Marcos, but then, there were no charges brought against him and no investigation ever conducted on the false accusation that he masterminded the bombing of the Philippine International Convention Center (afterwards authorities caught Doris Baffrey, who later became a leading light in PTV-4). In addition, Salonga, who, prior to his house arrest, was detained in a cell in Fort Bonifacio vacated by Ninoy Aquino (who by then had flown to the United States for heart surgery), pointed out that he was held incommunicado even in his house arrest.

By contrast, said Salonga, Estrada has been indicted on a charge of plunder, a capital offense punishable by *reclusion perpetua* to death. What Salonga seemed to be stressing was that Erap's case is far more serious than the case brought against him during martial law, but despite this, Erap's condition in Sta. Rosa looks like a picnic. The deposed president is not even incommunicado, as he makes up his list of visitors.

* * *

Miracles keep constantly happening. Weeks ago, this column wrote of the launch by Makati citizens of their "Crusade for Good Governance," inspired by People Power II. The Makati citizens' crusade was meant as a campaign against the corruption of the 15-year rule of Mayor Jojo Binay and his wife Elenita. The crusade is backing up the "Clean Team" of mayoralty and vice-mayoralty candidates Edu Manzano and Ace Barbers, respectively, and of Melon Recto-Silverio for Joker Arroyo's House seat in the first district of Makati.

A few weeks back, too, inspired by the same People Power II, the citizens of San Juan launched their own "San Juan Alliance for Good Governance." This movement is an attempt to put an end to the three decades of the "Estrada political dynasty," which is now fielding Estrada's son by Guia Gomez, JV Ejercito, as mayoralty candidate in place of his half-brother Jinggoy Estrada. The alliance listed the "sins" of this dynasty, among them "a deeply entrenched system of graft and corruption in all levels of governance," the coddling of criminals as in the Tuadles murder case, the proliferation of drugs due to the failure to apprehend the "real drug pushers," the rampant vote-buying and regard for public office as a "business venture" and many other problems. The alliance specifically noted the by now famous acquisition by the Estrada family of "big prime corner lots" in San Juan.

* * *

One can see the similarity in the pattern of the crusades in these two Metro Manila towns, e.g., the participation of middle- and upper-class elements who compose the more respected segments of society there. Many of them are women leaders, in fact, bolstering the notion that in this country the real men are the women. But it's common knowledge that both places are controlled by the dynasties who rely on their hold on the broad masses that outnumber the upper classes. So it's really like *suntok sa buwan*. But this does not deter the crusaders from trying to unseat the ruling dynasties in both places. As they always say, miracles do happen.

* * *

In San Juan, the alliance is backing up a lineup led by Ronald Estella for the lone congressional seat, former Mayor Dolfo Sto. Domingo for mayor and Baby San Pascual for vice mayor. The lineup of councilors is composed of a broad band of young professionals. The San Juan crusaders have asked President Macapagal to remove or transfer municipal officials who are loyal Estrada followers, arguing that for as long as these officials remain in position, "the opposition to the Estradas can never hope to win in any election." The officials who are the object of a removal campaign are treasurer Belen Martinez, district supervisor Aida Nocete, Police chief Gilbert Cruz, Comelec representative Floriana O. de Guia and prosecutor Ireneo M. Quintano.

The alliance is also asking the Comelec to place San Juan under its control and to utilize private school teachers, instead of public school teachers, as poll clerks, and that the canvassing be done at the San Juan Elementary School Gym, instead of at the City Hall. "It is a foregone conclusion that the election in San Juan will be as dirty and fraudulent as ever unless the conduct of the forthcoming election is taken out of the hands of these officials."

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LETTERS

Far from being mature voters

SINCE I am not running for public office, I can freely state what many candidates know full well but would never dream of saying publicly: We are still a long way from being mature voters.

A glance at the surveys and political rallies reveal that the topnotchers are still the noisiest, flashiest and most visible candidates. Has anything changed?

I think it's pointless to ask voters to "Vote Wisely." Is there any voter who does not believe he/she votes wisely? When the "*masa*" elected President Estrada, a confessed and unrepentant womanizer and gambler who was also a non-performing senator who refused to participate in the presidential debates, they believed they were voting wisely. Ask them why and they'd reply: "*Kasi siya ay 'para sa mahirap!'*"

Instead of using empty admonitions to vote wisely, advertisements should encourage voters to seek education beyond a candidate's slogans, entertainment value, physical appearance, witticisms and media mileage.

Also, I wish someone would research on the percentage of voters who write on their ballots a candidate's screen name or alias. Maybe if the Commission on Elections allowed only the voters using the name the candidate is baptized with, e.g. no Erap, no Kabayan, no Bistek, and yes, not even Estrada, this may help level the playing field in favor of those candidates who do not have as much media exposure.—**ALLAN HILARIO, Retiro Street, Quezon City**

Merit, fitness and correct English

BECAUSE government agencies prefer English to any other language in writing their letters, memos, resolutions, they must now promote to supervisory positions only those employees who can write English grammatically. As of today, many government supervisors from the lowest division chief up to the highest director, cannot write grammatically because they were promoted to their supervisory positions even when grammar lapses litter their written communications.

This personnel promotion policy sits well with the merit and fitness principle that is behind any credible civil service system.—**T.B. ABAYAN, 13-A Banning St., North Fairview, Quezon City**

'Green rating' explained

THE INQUIRER'S one-page feature on the "green rating" of senatorial candidates last Earth Day (April 22) has directed attention to the importance of looking into the candidates' environmental performance and agenda. Some of this attention was in the form of questions, particularly from the candidates themselves who felt that they deserve a "green rating." The Earth Day Network Philippines feels that the "green rating" process deserves further explanation.

For one, the "green rating" was based on 10 very strict criteria: environmental knowledge, personal action in environmental protection, support for others in environmental work, promotion of social equity, commitment to people's empowerment, advocacy with courage, inspired leadership, non-involvement in environmentally destructive action, personal lifestyle and integrity. Six of the criteria are not among the traditional environmental yardsticks. The Earth Day Network Philippines, however, strongly believes that when a so-called leader lacks integrity and is involved in graft and corruption, or does not lift a hand to censure graft and corruption, then his or her actions eventually damage the environment. If a so-called leader does not support agrarian reform or ancestral domain claims and does not actively provide opportunities for the basic sectors to be part of policy formulation and decision-making, then the environment eventually loses as poverty and disempowerment worsen. If a so-called leader leads a wasteful life, is a drunkard or gambler, and cannot be an example for others, then he or she cannot provide the inspired leadership for changes in values and lifestyle called for in Agenda 21, the environmental agenda approved during the 1992 Earth Summit.

In the rating of those who were selected to be members of a Green Electoral College, there were candidates who truly did well in environmental work such as being authors or major supporters of environmental bills or in planting trees but failed in other criteria as they have been involved or implicated in corruption cases or in shady deals. The raters also indicated negative marks on those who have been involved in human rights violations or allowed to let the violations happen. Negative marks were also placed on those who were seen to support war, either through joint military exercises or action that have worsened the war in Mindanao. The same for those who have been involved in extra-marital affairs or cannot be a model for other Filipinos, like the candidate who called them insects just because they didn't go to prestigious universities, demonstrating her contempt for the basic sectors.

We fervently hope that all Filipinos will be as strict as the Earth Day Network's "green rating" when they choose their future leaders come election time.—**DELFIN J. GANAPIN JR., secretary general, Earth Day Network Philippines**

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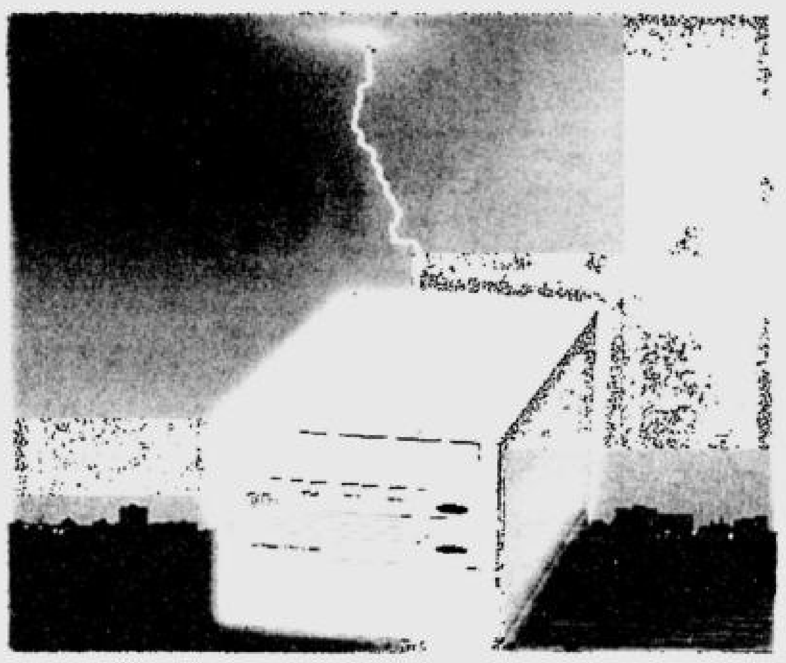

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Stellar work by Parañaque police

ON BEHALF of the Feliciano family, I wish to take this opportunity to thank Col. Ronald Estilles, chief of police of the Parañaque Police Department, and his men for all the effort and hard work they poured in finding an early solution to the rape/slay of my daughter, Claudine Mabel.

Through Estilles' office, allow me to extend our heartfelt gratitude to Police Lieutenant Arriate, Police Investigator Tigson and the rest of the Parañaque police force who worked extensive hours and spent sleepless nights during the time that we were all facing a blank wall at the start of the investigation.

The speedy arrest of suspect Ernesto Berry followed instantaneously by the capture of a second suspect, Nieves Constancio alias "Boy Tisoy" who was apprehended in faraway Sta. Ana, Cagayan, have caught us all by surprise.

Right now, I still stand in disbelief, my heart filled with awe and admiration for Estilles and his men. The commitment and dedication exhibited by the Parañaque police have indeed brought honor and respect not only on Estilles but also on the entire Philippine National Police.

Even though the other suspects remain at large, I am now confident that Estilles will be able to catch them soon. The loss of my daughter has brought us unimaginable grief and sorrow but the pain has somehow receded with the thought that justice for my daughter Claudine Mabel is forthcoming.—**ROLANDO B. FELICIANO, 227 Ferrari Drive, Camella Homes, Sucat, Parañaque City**

On Samaranch's latest visit

COLUMNIST Manolo Iñigo's piece about the recent visit of International Olympic Committee president Juan Antonio Samaranch is partly inaccurate and mostly speculative. To set the record straight, I wish to point out the following:

As he himself stated, Samaranch came to Manila for the third time in the course of his "farewell" visit to all 199 NOCs because he is retiring this year after serving as IOC president for 20 years. Contrary to Iñigo's views, Samaranch has no hidden agenda.

There is no truth to Iñigo's claim that the Philippine Olympic Committee only invited sports officials sympathetic to Celso L. Dayrit (POC president) and Francisco Elizalde (IOC representative to the Philippines). All NSA presidents and current chairpersons of various POC commissions, the PSC chair and commissioners and the only two Filipinos who served as International Federation president—Gonzalo "Lito" Puyat II (Fiba) and Florencio Campomanes (Fide)—were invited. This explains the presence of retired Gen. Rene R. Cruz, ethics commission chair and past POC president. Samaranch himself did not want to meet too many people because his visit was very short and his schedule was quite tight. In fact, he did not even have a press briefing.

Go Teng Kok, as Patafa president, was sent a memo, inviting him to the breakfast meeting with Samaranch and asking him to confirm his attendance by April 5, 2001. Unfortunately, Go did not confirm. That's the reason his name did not appear in the guest list. But when he showed up at the Westin Philippine Plaza, he was welcomed since he is an NSA head. As in other important POC occasions, confirmation is required to determine the size of the reservation.

On the other hand, weightlifting's Rodones Sicat claimed he confirmed his attendance only on the day Samaranch was arriving (many days after the deadline) and with somebody else. That's the reason his name was not on the guest list. However, Sicat, contrary to Iñigo's story, came and, like Go, was welcomed. In fact, the POC has a picture of Sicat and Samaranch in the company of other NSA presidents and various committee chairpersons.

It's an insult to say that former Secretary Robert N. Aventajado was named POC chair "principally for political exigency because he was a ranking official of the past administration..." Aventajado was elected (not appointed as Iñigo wrote) chair of the POC. In 1999, the POC general assembly amended the POC constitution and bylaws, creating the position of chair.—**ROMEO M. RIBAÑO, secretary general, Philippine Olympic Committee**

Typhoons, more beneficial than destructive

THIS refers to the letter of Regina Ravelo-Marasigan (PDI, 3/28/01) titled, "'Darna' can't be associated with destruction," requesting that "Darna" be stricken out of our new list of tropical cyclone names.

We really appreciate Ravelo-Marasigan's concern that Darna, a superhero created by her late father, Mars Ravelo, as a name for tropical cyclones, should not be associated with destruction, havoc and death. We wish to point out that these atmospheric systems have far greater beneficial effects to our country than are commonly perceived by the public. They account for more than 60 percent of the fresh water that we receive yearly from rainfall and, through their relatively strong winds, they cleanse our air of the pollution that accumulates during calm or stable atmospheric conditions. Water shortage or drought and polluted air bring more destruction, havoc and death than tropical cyclones. Thus, we have a reason to be thankful that we are blessed with the most number of these cyclones in the world.

We wish to assure Ravelo-Marasigan that, as we announced earlier, there will be a continuing review and, if warranted, revision of the list of tropical cyclone names. We will take into consideration her request accordingly.—**LEONCIO A. AMADORE, director, Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa), Asiatrust Bank Bldg., 1424 Quezon Ave., Quezon City**

Response to Mendiola's mob

THE ARREST of deposed President Estrada on plunder and other criminal charges was like a surgical knife that slit open a wound that has been festering since long before Edsa I.

To my mind, it's best that this has happened. For worms thrive where they are hidden by the gangrenous crust of political opportunism and compromise. It is only when they are exposed to sunlight and the antiseptic glare of public scrutiny and criticism that they begin to die.

Unfortunately, from out of the wound that Erap's arrest opened has also slithered hardy maggots of the old order that we had striven to vanquish in the past. It is these maggots—recycled former Marcos lieutenants like Erap himself—who have repackaged and resurrected their political lives, who continue to fool our people, especially the poor masses, into doing stupid things, from electing hooligans into office to storming the Palace gates with only a stone and a prayer, who continue to push us to the brink.

We spent Labor Day glued to our TV sets, watching apparently drug and alcohol-boosted, cop-hating members of the lumpen proletariat obviously recruited and paid to form the frontline of the Erap loyalists' march on Malacañang. It was good waking up the next morning with our sanity intact, knowing that we still have a government not run by the Mendiola mob.

But let us not rest easy. The political opportunists behind the Erap loyalists had styled their struggle as a "war of the poor against the rich." Considering the massive numbers that had heeded the call for such a war, it behooves the government and the more fortunate sectors of our society to respond accordingly with a war against poverty that goes beyond mere slogans and platitudes to real, thoroughgoing reform and reconstruction. Easier said than done by what remains to be the only platform that this government must work on if our country is to achieve true and lasting peace and prosperity. Failing this, we shall forever be in a state of lawless violence and nihilistic rebellion.—**ED L. SANTOALLA, 99 Matimtiman St., Sikatuna Village, Quezon City**

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The WORLD

US resumes China spy flights

WASHINGTON—The US military resumed surveillance flights near China, sending an Air Force RC-135 aircraft along the northeast coastline. No Chinese fighter jets tried to interfere.

China subsequently protested the resumption of the flights, saying it would urge Washington to "correct such wrong doings."

"China has constantly opposed US spy flights off China's coast and will continue to lodge serious representations with the United States on the resumption of such flights," Xinhua news agency quoted foreign ministry spokesperson Sun Yuxi as saying yesterday.

Sun urged the United States to "draw lessons and correct such wrong doings," the report said.

BEIJING—China said yesterday that a US spy plane stranded in southern China could not fly back to the United States.

"The Chinese side has several times stated clearly in relevant Sino-US negotiations that it is impossible for the US EP-3 plane to fly back to the US from Hainan Island," Xinhua news agency quoted spokesperson Sun Yuxi as saying.

Sun was responding to comments by US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfield in which he expressed hopes the plane could be repaired at the Chinese base and flown back to the United States. *AFP*

The renewal of the reconnaissance flights on Monday came as the Bush administration pondered how to retrieve its downed Navy spy plane—sitting crippled on a Chinese military runway since its April 1 collision with a Chinese F-8 fighter jet.

At the White House, spokesperson Ari Fleischer declined comment on the latest flight. "It's not something the White House talks about," he said.

The administration had said it intended to the resume surveillance missions at some point, but refused to specify a time frame. China has demanded an end to the flights. Its military jets have routinely shadowed US surveillance flights.

The RC-135 flew a "routine pattern" from Kadena Air Base on the Japanese island of Okinawa and then back again, a defense official said, speaking only on condition of anonymity.

The unarmed aircraft had no US fighter escorts during the daylight mission, the official added.

He declined to comment on whether any more flights would follow in the near future, or where they might be sent.

Monday's was the first such flight since the Navy EP-3E Aries II plane collided with the Chinese fighter jet last month and the US plane was forced to make an emergency landing on China's southern Hainan Island.

The pilot of the Chinese jet was lost in the collision and the 24 crew members of the EP-3E were held by on Hainan for 11 days. The US plane was badly damaged in the incident and officials say the Chinese likely harvested valuable intelligence from the plane, although the crew apparently managed to destroy the most sensitive information.

The RC-135 and the Navy's EP-3E are older aircraft that have been rebuilt to collect and analyze electronic signals to monitor military communications and activities. The turbofan RC-135 operates with a crew of up to 27 people, including three pilots, two navigators, three electronic warfare officers, 14 intelligence operators and maintenance technicians. *AP and AFP*

Macedonia backs off from declaring state of war after appeals

SKOPJE, Macedonia—Under pressure from abroad to de-escalate tensions, the Macedonian government has backed away from its push to declare a state of war—a move that would have allowed it to sidestep democratic rules in its battle against ethnic Albanian insurgents.

Government forces on Monday fired mortar rounds at rebel-held villages in the northeast even as Nato Secretary General Lord Robertson implored the Balkan country's disparate political parties to join in a broad coalition to bolster Macedonia's democracy. He suggested that only compromise could snatch the country from "the brink of the abyss."

"The international community will not allow democratic institutions to be undermined by the bunch of murderers stuck in the mountains," he said. "There must be no support for those who are choosing violence."

In New York, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan warned of more serious conflict "with direct consequences for the entire Balkan region," unless the violence ended.

In Washington, White House spokesperson Ari Fleischer said US President George W. Bush backed Macedonian government efforts "to fight the extremists who have brought the violence to the region."

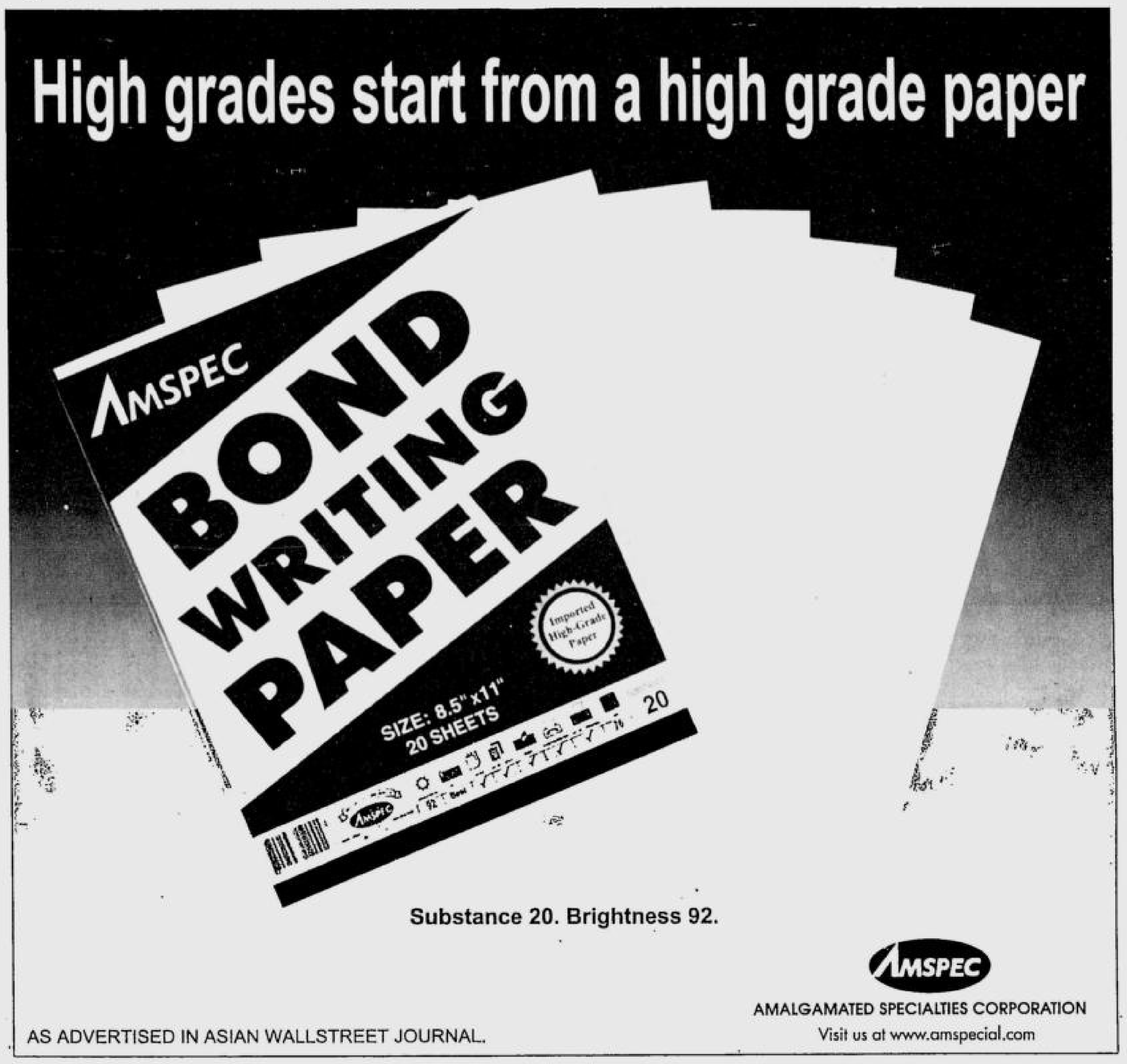
Swayed by Western leaders, Macedonia's leadership postponed a parliamentary vote set for Tuesday in which they were to consider declaring a state of war, essentially allowing the government to bypass parliament. Western officials believed such a move could push more ethnic Albanians—up to a third of the largely Slav population of 2 million—to support the rebels.

Heavy government artillery fire slammed into the villages harboring rebels near the Yugoslav province of Kosovo. Helicopter gunships fired rockets into homes that military officials said ethnic Albanian militants were using as sniper positions.

By day's end, the government claimed the rebels had withdrawn over the northern border to Kosovo. Rebel leaders could not be reached for comment, but US forces serving with Nato-led peacekeepers in Kosovo reported making no arrests of militants crossing the border Monday.

While Macedonia's ethnic Albanian insurgents say they are independent of other groups, Macedonia's government and its foreign allies link the rebels with ethnic Albanian guerrillas in the buffer zone around Kosovo.

Nato's entry into Kosovo in mid-1999 ended fighting there between Serbs and the ethnic Albanian majority. Kosovo—a province in the Serbian republic of Yugoslavia—now is administered by the United Nations, but Kosovo's Albanians demand full independence and militants there support insurgents both in Macedonia and the buffer zone. Nato has stepped up patrols on Kosovo's outer edges to stop fighters and supplies moving to the two neighboring areas of conflict. *AP*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Mideast conflict deaths mount

JERUSALEM—Three Palestinians, including a baby girl, were killed Monday as Israel stepped up its military response to Palestinian attacks and seized a Lebanese boat it said was packed with 40 tons of smuggled arms.

Four-month-old Iman Hajjour was killed by shell fire when Israeli forces struck at the town and refugee camp of Khan Yunis in the southern Gaza Strip in retaliation to Palestinian mortar attacks on Jewish settlements.

Iman Hajjour's sister, Suzanne, 19, was seriously wounded and 20 other people slightly injured in the attack, Palestinian officials said.

Palestinian officials immediately revived the call for an international protection force in the region.

"After this butchery, we call on the international community to provide international protection to the Palestinian people," said secretary to the Palestinian presidency, Tayeb Abdel Rahim.

Meanwhile 30-year-old Palestinian policeman Murad al-H'ruch was killed and two of his colleagues injured when Israeli soldiers opened fire on a Palestinian patrol in Samuaa, near the West Bank town of Hebron, a Palestinian security official said. *AFP*

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Seoul calls off army exercise with Tokyo over book dispute

SEOUL—South Korea yesterday called off a joint naval exercise with Japan to protest school textbooks that it believes whitewash Tokyo's wartime atrocities.

The joint Navy search-and-rescue drill, originally scheduled for June in the East China Sea, will be postponed indefinitely pending resolution of the textbook dispute, said Yoon Il-young, a spokesperson for Seoul's Defense Ministry.

This year's exercise was to have been the second since 1999. The two countries have recently been drawn closer by their perceived common threat from communist North Korea.

The decision came after Foreign Minister Han Seung-soo summoned Japan's ambassador to Seoul Terusuke Terada to officially demand revisions of eight junior high school textbooks that critics say distort or tone down Japan's invasion of South Korea and other Asian countries in the first half of the 20th century.

During a 30-minute meeting with Terada, Han delivered a document detailing Seoul's demands for changes of 35 controversial passages in the eight books.

"The textbook issue has not only inflicted a deep shock on the minds of our people but also damaged an agreement reached earlier between the two countries to clear up the past and forge a future-oriented relationship," Han said.

Japanese Foreign Minister Makiko Tanaka said yesterday that her government would closely consider South Korea's position.

"Our government takes it seriously and needs to fully examine it," Tanaka said. Top government spokesperson Yasuo Fukuda also made a similar statement at a regular news conference yesterday morning. *AP*

Beijing also furious

BEIJING—A state-run Chinese newspaper yesterday blasted new Japanese history textbooks for glossing over Japan's 1937-1945 aggression in China and the carnage it brought.

"Showing no respect for the truth, Japanese right-wing revisionists are consciously pushing Japan's young generation toward a kind of historical amnesia," an editorial in the China Daily said.

The eight new middle school and elementary school textbooks, and particularly a middle school text written by nationalist scholars, have enraged many of Japan's Asian neighbors for their treatment of World War II and Japanese empire building in the early 20th century.

South Korea has listed 25 passages in the most controversial book that it calls distortions of Japan's 1910-1945 colonization of the Korean Peninsula. Seoul yesterday protested by calling off a joint military exercise with Japan.

The textbooks aren't in the classroom yet, and the most criticized book may not see use at all. This summer, Japanese schools will separately choose which of the eight to use.

A passage in the most criticized book reportedly uses the word "advance" instead of invasion to describe the Japanese Army's move into Asia. Chinese media have also accused it of glossing over the sexual slavery of tens of thousands of Chinese and other Asian women by Japanese soldiers. *AP*

POPE John Paul II prays in the destroyed Greek Orthodox church in Quneitra on the Golan Heights May 7. The Pope appealed to the region's people to forgive past wrongs and commit themselves to peace. The city, which was captured by Israel in the 1967 war, was totally destroyed by withdrawing Israeli forces in 1974. REUTERS

Pope heads for Malta as he winds up visits

VALLETTA, Malta—After momentous gestures for religious reconciliation with others, Pope John Paul II heads to a bastion of his own church to close a journey that challenged the stamina of the frail Pontiff.

But the pilgrimage—which followed the steps of the Apostle Paul through Greece and Syria—also displayed the 80-year-old Pope's determination to continue the history-shaping acts that have defined his papacy.

The two-day stop in Malta, which began yesterday, should offer John Paul a chance to catch his breath after two highly charged backdrops: festering Middle East conflicts and the 1,000-year estrangement between the Vatican and the Eastern Orthodox churches.

The Pope should encounter only ecstatic crowds on returning after 11 years to Malta, where nearly 98 percent of the 392,000 people are baptized Roman Catholic.

The Pope will also fulfill a dream for many on the Mediterranean island nation: beatification of a beloved local priest, Rev. George Preca, who founded a religious society that reached out to the common workers and their families. Beatification is the last formal step before possible sainthood.

Preca, who died in 1962, overcame initial obstacles from the Roman Catholic leadership in Malta to establish the Society of Christian Doctrine, a group of lay men and women who pledge themselves to celibacy, missionary work and a routine of private prayer. The society now has about 1,100 active members and operates schools in Malta and six other countries, including Australia and Peru.

The remains of Preca have been moved to a raised tomb at the society's main church, and the Pope plans to view an effigy of the body in a glass enclosure.

Also scheduled for beatification by John Paul are two 19th century religious figures: Maria Adeodata Pisani, a cloistered nun, and Nazju Falzon, who founded a Christian association that attracted many British military members in the former colony. *AP*

Biggs back behind bars

LONDON—Ronnie Biggs, the self-styled "gentleman criminal" who eluded capture for decades after taking part in Britain's Great Train Robbery, was back in Britain and back behind bars—jailed in a high-security prison after returning home and surrendering to Scotland Yard.

His lawyers said Monday that they would fight to prevent the ailing 71-year-old Biggs from having to serve out his time for the 1963 heist, at the time considered Britain's crime of the century. "All he seeks is a fair and balanced hearing at which all relevant issues can be addressed," said Jane Wearing, a spokesperson for the robber.

No date has been announced for an appeal.

Biggs, barely able to speak and walking with difficulty after a series of strokes, was flown to Britain from Brazil aboard a jet chartered by the tabloid Sun newspaper, which helped arrange for him to give himself up. "Got Him," the tabloid said in a banner headline.

At Biggs' brief court appearance hours after he landed, there was little evidence of the dashing, dapper criminal who had captured the public imagination in Britain. A police doctor gently wiped spittle from his chin as he grunted responses to the judge's questions.

His lawyers said they would use his ill health and the amount of time lapsed since the crime to contest authorities' plans to have him serve the 28 years remaining on his 30-year sentence. Biggs broke out of jail less than two years into his term.

Wearing said Biggs thanked British authorities for the swift treatment of his passport application to allow him to return home "in order to resolve his future."

She said the authorities responsible for his health were aware of his illness, and "he will receive proper medical attention as soon as possible." *AP*

At the Philippine Crafts Department

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Asean to build gas pipeline connecting member-states

SINGAPORE—Its supporters say it has the potential to bring peace and stability to Southeast Asia, but critics call it a pipe dream.

Over the next couple of decades, the state-owned oil companies of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations plan to link together thousands of kilometers of pipe—both underwater and on land—to form a massive natural gas pipeline.

Backers hope the project will be a major boost to Asean integration and eventually extend beyond Southeast Asia, possibly to China and India. While requiring a huge amount of coordination to build, the pipeline would ensure a constant supply of natural gas for the region.

But political unrest in Indonesia and border disputes between Thailand and Burma threaten to derail the grand vision, and no one knows if the pan-Asian pipeline will become a reality or remain in its current, fragmented state.

Much of the gas that will be tapped to feed the giant energy grid is in Indonesia, where separatist rebel activity threatens the economic viability of the project. On April 7 a grenade thrown by separatists exploded near a gas extraction installation in Lhoksukon, about 1,750 km northwest of Jakarta, setting it on fire.

"Our own perception is that these political instabilities are just ripples," said Guillermo Balce, the head of the Asean Center for Energy in Indonesia. "The countries of Southeast Asia, politically, are in harmony because they have to be, especially at the economic level."

Asean countries Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Burma, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam have agreed to the project in principle.

But there is no timetable set for its completion, and estimates on its cost fluctuate between $15 billion and $30 billion.

About 2,540 km of cross-border pipeline is already in place between Malaysia and Singapore, Burma and Thailand, and Indonesia and Singapore.

The first gas to travel through a $1.5-billion, 640 km pipeline went from Indonesia to Singapore in January.

Another pipeline from Indonesia to Singapore is under construction at a cost of $1.2 billion.

The exact length of an eventual trans-Asean pipeline is not known. And no one has estimated how much extra pipe—feeding off the main line—will be needed to service the domestic markets in each nation.

AP

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Wednesday, May 9, 2001
4th Week of Easter

1st Reading: **Acts 12:24—13:5**
Gospel: **Jn 12:44-50**

Jesus had said, and even cried out, "Whoever believes in me, believes not in me but in him who sent me. And whoever sees me, sees him who sent me. I have come into the world as light, so that whoever believes in me may not remain in darkness.

If anyone hears my words and does not keep them, I am not the one to condemn him; for I have come, not to condemn the world, but to save the world. The one who rejects me, and does not receive my word, already has a judge: the very word I have spoken will condemn him on the last day.

For I have not spoken on my own authority; the Father who sent me has instructed me in what to say and how to speak. I know that his commandment is eternal life, and that is why the message I give, I give as the Father instructed me."

Commentary:

Jesus repeatedly declares that he is sent to manifest in his life, words, and deeds the One who sent him and God's intent for the world; namely, to give it life and the fullness of it. One who refuses to see in Jesus the signs of God's concern for the world rejects the very principle of its enlightenment and salvation. Our well-being is God's purpose. But we can so blind ourselves that we are unable to see this. We want the spectacular and not the humility of God's self-revelation in Jesus.

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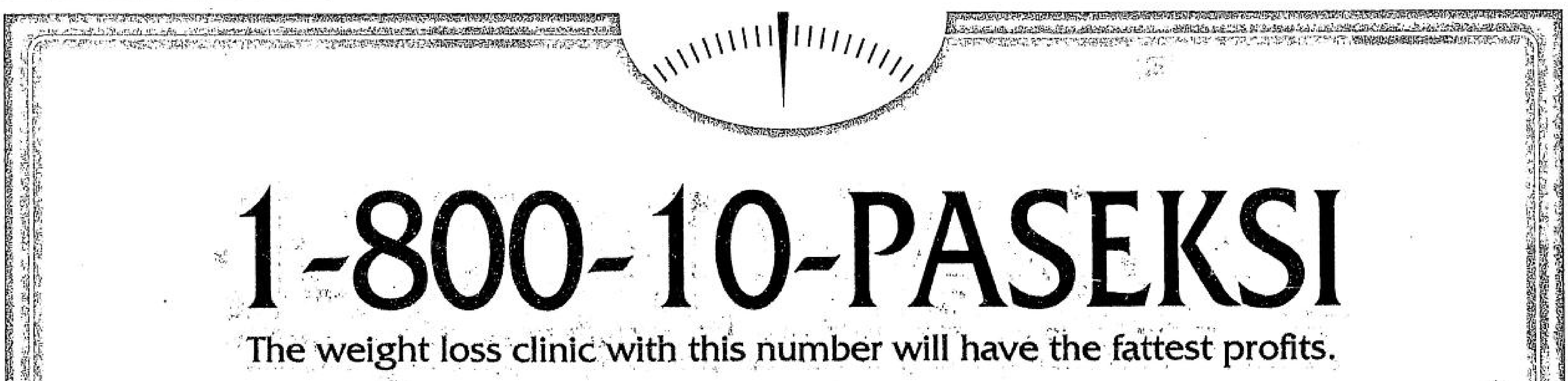
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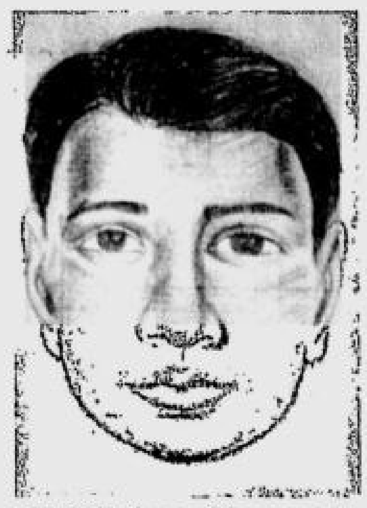
Across the NATION

TONY BERGONIA, Assistant Editor

Vigilantes to avenge murder of Platon

BY MEI MAGSINO
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau



SKETCH of one of the suspects in the assassination.

TANAUAN CITY—Police are rushing to arrest three suspected assassins of outgoing Tanauan City mayor and People Power Coalition gubernatorial candidate Cesar Platon as they downplayed reports that a vigilante group plans to take matters in their own hands should authorities fail to get the mayor's killers.

Platon, 54, president of the Batangas League of Municipal Mayors and senior vice president of the Boy Scouts of the Philippines, died of four .45 cal. bullet wounds in the head.

His brain parts were strewn on the pavement of the Tuy town covered court at the town plaza, just 25 meters from the local police station at 12:10 a.m., Monday. Supt. Rolando Lorenzo, Batangas police provincial director, yesterday confirmed that they have yet to determine if Platon was a victim of the NPA or was killed by hired guns.

Lorenzo said he sent at least three police teams to where the suspects in the killing could be hiding.

The suspects' cartographic sketches were released yesterday.

The witnesses include the fallen mayor's private secretary, Nora Opillanio, 27, of Poblacion 1, Tanauan.

Another witness is a woman popcorn vendor whose identity was withheld by the police for fear of reprisal by the suspects.

Investigators are also on the track of the owner of a white Toyota Revo believed to be the suspects' get-away vehicle.

The van was seen in a dimly lighted and secluded area near the Tuy town plaza prior to the mayor's assassination.

Presidential adviser Eduardo Ermita said the slaying has disrupted the Lakas-NUCD provincial hierarchy.

He dismissed the claim of the Melito Glor Command and its accusations against Platon. "I have known Platon for so many years and I can attest to his integrity and honest governance. He is also very fair in dealing with people of all walks of life. We have lost a great man. I hope this won't happen again as it disrupts the peace and tranquility in our province," Ermita said.

The people of Tanauan are set to stage an indignation rally today in protest of the three-day old senseless killing of their "Miracle Man."

Expected to join the protest are Tanauan residents, anti-crime groups, the Citizens' Crime Watch, religious groups, the business sector, Boy Scouts of the Philippines Batangas Chapter and members of local press clubs.

Sources from the Lakas and PPC camps revealed that the officials are planning to tap Platon's brother, Vicente, to fill the vacuum left by the fallen leader. This developed as members of a group that claimed to be Batangas vigilantes composed of retired government officials and employees, police, military and gun club members have been preparing to revenge Platon's death.

"We are not afraid, whoever they are. Our guns have the same intensity of shots and we, too, know how to die. They will see the real Batangueño. Once we identify them, whether they are NPA or henchmen of politicians, we'll fight them to death," one of the vigilante members said.

"They killed a good man who has no sin against his country. They should pay. If they will not surface, we will involve their families. They, too, have brothers and sisters, espouses, children," he added. As of late afternoon yesterday, the vigilante group has organized over 200 fully armed members with pistols and high-powered rifles.

Comelec official, son slain in Maguindanao

COTABATO CITY—An official of the Commission on Elections (Comelec) and his son were gunned down by armed men in Buluan, Maguindanao on Monday afternoon.

Buluan election registrar Ustadz Panga Bernan and his 19-year-old son Jonathan had just come from a "final coordinating conference" of police, military, education and election officials held at the Army headquarters of the 6th Infantry Division in Datu Odin Sinsuat town when they were ambushed near a bridge in Buluan.

The victims were on their way to Buluan where elder Bernan had to hold a briefing with local candidates and peace officers.

Police said the victim's pick-up was riddled with bullets.

Bernan, who served as election officer in various towns in Maguindanao in the past 10 years, was the first election official to be killed in the province. But the incident was the fourth election-related violence since March 24, when Lakas campaigner Ludivico Bañaga was killed in Ampatuan town.

On April 4, five persons were killed when armed men fired at a graduation ceremony in Kabuntalan town.

On Sunday, Mangurak Didaw, a supporter of reelectionist Maguindanao Gov. Zacaria Candao, was killed in Barira town.

Buluan is one of the Maguindanao towns that the police and military wanted placed under Comelec control.

The Comelec and its deputized agencies for the May 14 elections agreed to ask the Marines to transport ballot boxes from Bongo Island to the police regional headquarters in Parang, Maguindanao, where the counting of votes will be held.

Vote counting

Filled up ballots of voters in Buldon, Matanog and Barira will also be brought to Camp Pendatun in Parang for the counting, Lawyer Clarita Callar, Comelec director for Central Mindanao, said.

Callar also announced the replacement of Kasan Usi as acting Maguindanao election supervisor after he voluntarily inhibited himself from the conduct of the elections because of his relationship with some of the candidates.

Callar said Usi was replaced by Manila-based Comelec official Winny Asdala.

The streak of violence is spreading like a virus in the provinces.

In Cebu City, five unidentified armed men fired at a vehicle boarded by three reelectionist councilors and their four companions in Tabuelan town, about 86.9 kilometers northwest of this city.

No one was hurt, but the suspects poured gasoline on the pick-up and set it afire.

Councilors Rey Oca, Flordilez Velayo and Crisostomo Arneja of the Abag-Promdi party told the Tabuelan police that they were going to Barangay Mabunao, about seven kilometers from the town proper, to attend a fiesta.

Hitchhikers

Three unidentified hitchhikers were also with the councilors on board the vehicle.

While the councilors got near Barangay Mabunao, the five suspects suddenly blocked their path and fired at the vehicle.

The driver, Eduardo Abanid, immediately maneuvered the vehicle and stopped a few feet away to allow him and his passengers to get out.

Senior Supt. Jose Antonio Salvacion, Cebu provincial police office director, expressed doubts on the incident.

He said there was only one bullet hole in the vehicle's right door. The police only recovered from the scene about 14 spent bullets and slugs of a .45 caliber pistol and not bullets from long firearms as claimed by the councilors.

Salvacion said he was wondering why not one of the passengers was hit after the suspects fired at the vehicle. He added that it was also established that the firearms used were locally made.

Former Rep. Celestino Martinez of the fourth district that includes Tabuelan town said he believed the incident was politically motivated.

He said a senator, whom he did not identify, hired armed persons to harass their supporters and candidates in the district.

Salvacion said the attack was politically motivated because it happened only five days before the May 14 elections.

Politician

Police are also investigating the reported presence of armed persons hired by a politician in the fourth district.

Salvacion said they were also looking into the possible involvement of enemies of the three councilors and the involvement of the New People's Army.

Despite the attack, Salvacion said he would not recommend that Tabuelan town be placed under the control of the Commission on Elections because the ambush on the councilors was an isolated incident. *Charlie Señase and Edwin Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau and Jhunnex Napallacan, PDI Visayas Bureau*

Teachers wary of poll duty

BY ALEX PAL
PDI Visayas Bureau

DUMAGUETE CITY—Public school teachers in Canlaon City are hesitant to serve in the May 14 elections .for fear that violence may erupt following the April 27 ambush that killed vice mayor and mayoral candidate Jose "Ondo" Cardenas, his sister and four others.

Eddie Aba, Commission on Elections (Comelec) supervisor in Canlaon, said teachers from Barangays Budlasan and Buncalan went to his office on Monday to voice their concern about their safety.

But he said he assured them that he would not oppose should the Board of Election Inspectors (BEI) decide to transfer the canvassing of votes from these two barangays to the city proper.

Section 40 of Comelec Resolution 3743 allows the BEI to transfer the venue of the canvassing of votes through a unanimous vote with the concurrence of a majority of the watchers, said Aba.

About 303 teachers will serve as members of the BEIs in Canlaon City. Thirty-six of them will serve in Barangays Budlasan and Buncalan.

Tension remains high in Canlaon City following the ambush in Barangay Budlasan that claimed the lives of Vice Mayor Cardenas, his sister Jessica and four others.

The New Peoples' Army (NPA) had owned up the ambush, saying the vice mayor was killed because of his "sins against the people." But the Cardenas family believed that the killing was the work of hired killers. Also slain in the attack were Hospicio Condes Jr., acting city administrator and People Power Coalition campaign manager; driver Calvin Neri and supporters Telesforo Fajardo and Ricardo Ocag.

Wounded were vice mayoral candidate Jimmy Clerigo, Nick Malones, Ramil Salazar, Helen Tano, Julius Dellonardo, Jose Lara, Aurelio Cagatin and Julius Escala.

Provincial election supervisor Rogelio Benjamin earlier sent an urgent telegram asking the Comelec to place Canlaon City under Comelec control to ensure that the elections would be peaceful and orderly.

But the Comelec commissioners have yet to act on the recommendation.

Despite the absence of a Comelec declaration, the military and police have been placed on full alert to prevent a repeat of the killings.

Canlaon City, about 160 kilometers north of the capital Dumaguete City, was one of the areas identified by the Comelec as an area of concern, because of the sightings of armed men believed to be communist guerrillas in the area.

Politics is also being hotly contested in Canlaon. Cardenas was running against Julius Amador of the Nationalist People's Coalition.

Hagedorn turns self in to face oust Gloria rap

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY—City Mayor Edward Hagedorn on Monday turned himself in to authorities to confront charges that he took part in the plot to oust installed President Macapagal-Arroyo and was in the list of persons to be arrested.

Hagedorn, accompanied by his son Clink, wife Ellen, legal counsels and a handful of supporters, personally went to the Philippine National Police provincial office to turn himself in.

He had just returned from a campaign sortie in northern Palawan and claimed that he was only forced to leave for the city due to the report.

PNP Palawan provincial director Supt. Jacinto Diño, however, declined to arrest Hagedorn since, he said, there was no arrest warrant for him.

Palaweños were surprised Monday morning when a local radio station reported that Hagedorn was among those charged with rebellion in connection with the siege on Malacañang Palace by supporters of ousted President Joseph Estrada.

The station also reported that senatorial candidate Panfilo Lacson was arrested in a house in Sta. Rita Island, Barangay Cabayugan owned by Hagedorn.

The report on Lacson turned out to be false.

Hagedorn said his political opponents could be behind the report on his involvement in the anti-Macapagal plot.

Hagedorn admitted that he indeed went to Manila at the height of Edsa 3.

He said he flew in Sunday noon and told the people of Edsa that he sympathized with their call for the house arrest of Estrada.

He said he left the Edsa rally and stayed in a hotel in Manila the whole night prior to the siege on Malacañang.

Diño said Hagedorn's gesture was a sign that the mayor was ready to be arrested if indeed a warrant for his capture was issued. *Ruelle Albert Castro, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau, with report from Ronalyn Espallardo of Palawan Sun*

Gov ties royalty raps to polls

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY—The provincial government of Palawan yesterday dismissed the charges filed by a capitol employee against Gov. Joel Reyes and other officials as baseless, malicious and politically motivated.

With only six days left before the May 14 elections, it was apparent that the case was filed by Nicanor Sta. Cruz Jr. to discredit Reyes, who is seeking a fresh mandate in the gubernatorial race, a press statement from the governor's office said.

On April 30, Sta. Cruz filed a complaint before the Ombudsman, claiming that Reyes allegedly led provincial officials in entering into a "midnight deal" with a newly formed corporation that was granted a multibillion-dollar contract by the province.

He alleged that the contract would siphon off billions of pesos from the share of the province on the royalty collected from the Camago-Malampaya oil exploration off Palawan coast.

"We have reason to believe that a politician is behind these baseless accusations and Mr. Sta. Cruz, it seems, is an accessory to the political shenanigans of someone who has a propensity to conduct (a) smear campaign against his political enemies," said the statement signed by Rolando Bonoan Jr., provincial information officer.

Bonoan said the contract entered into by the provincial government was not a "midnight deal," as alleged by Sta. Cruz.

Time was spent for the discussion and deliberation of the proposal by the provincial council, which was open to the public including reporters, he said.

"Regarding the assignment of Palawan's share of the royalty of the Camago-Malampaya natural gas project, we wish to enlighten Mr. Sta. Cruz that based on the local government code, 80 percent of the share from the natural wealth must be used for energization and the lowering of energy costs," Bonoan added.

Geraldford Ticke, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Central and Southern Luzon, the whole of Visayas and Northern Mindanao will experience widespread rains while the rest of the country will have cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms.

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Anti-drug group nominee assailed

FIRST it was Goma. Now, another party-list group is calling on the public to take a careful look at MAD's second nominee.

The APEC party-list group called on voters not to waste their votes on MAD because its nominees have been misrepresenting themselves as private individuals.

"We are calling on the Senate to probe MAD and its use of public funds and PNP personnel during the time of the Estrada administration," APEC secretary general Louie Corral said in a press statement.

APEC said that MAD's second nominee is no less than the former head of the PNP National Drug Enforcement and Prevention Center (NDEP) who spearheaded the creation of MAD.

"Out of sheer *delicadeza*, General Jewel Canson should not have pursued his party-list nomination nor should he have entered the MAD program as a private organization. By so doing, he clearly used public funds to (push) his political career through the party-list elections," Corral said.

Corral challenged MAD to produce certificates from the Philippine National Police and the Dangerous Drugs Board stating that it has never received funds from the two agencies.

"Unlike DrugWatch which was able to submit such certificates to the Commission on Elections, MAD has been unable to disprove charges that it was not a government program of the previous administration," he said.

Corral also said the PNP should go public on the amount of funds that went into the creation of MAD under the term of Canson.

"All these attacks against MAD are karmic because its nominees merely rode on the anti-drugs program to get seats in Congress. They should be investigated and be held accountable for intellectual dishonesty, gross misrepresentation and misuse of public funds," Corral said.

3 issues in talks 'too heavy'

ROXAS, Isabela—Former Justice Secretary Silvestre Bello III, the government's chief peace negotiator, has described as "too heavy to handle" for the government and the National Democratic Front panels the three remaining issues that will be resolved in the ongoing peace talks.

"Issues on social economic reforms, political and constitutional reforms and the end of hostilities are too heavy to handle as these are controversial ones," Bello, who accompanied the People Power Coalition senatorial candidates in their campaign sortie here on Sunday, told the INQUIRER.

"Both panels have met to resolve social economic reforms. Heavy issues include national patrimony, nationalization, national industrialization, globalization, genuine land reform and the Visiting Forces Agreement," he said.

He blamed the administration of deposed President Joseph Estrada for the snagged peace talks two years ago.

Bello said the consensus on the implementation of the Comprehensive Agreement on Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law was a breakthrough as this used to be a "thorny issue" that led to the collapse of the peace talks in 1999.

"We have finally made extensive discussions and patient formulations on how to solve the issues," he said.

Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

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SRP: **P610,000**

TERM	12	18	24	36	48	60
Downpayment	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly
P100,000	P44,719	P30,980	P24,731	P17,796	P14,374	P13,039

Model: **Lancer GLX M/T**
SRP: **P615,000**

TERM	12	18	24	36	48	60
Downpayment	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly
P100,000	P45,086	P31,234	P24,934	P17,942	P14,492	P13,146

Model: **Endeavor**
SRP: **P705,000**

TERM	12	24	36	48	48	60
Downpayment	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly
P100,000	P51,684	P35,805	P28,583	P20,567	P16,613	P15,069

Model: **L300FB - Dual Aircon**
SRP: **P542,000**

TERM	12	24	36	48	48	60
Downpayment	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly
P100,000	P39,734	P27,527	P21,974	P15,812	P12,772	P11,585

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MITSUBISHI MOTORS

A Citizen's Statement

I have the right to speak!

At the outset, we declare that the idea of coming out with a statement is a spontaneous act. Many of us feel the strong need to voice our feelings about issues arising from the shameful incident perpetrated in the early darkness of May 1, 2001.

First, we wish to express our admiration for the gallantry and discipline of the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Philippine National Police – especially the officers, men and women who in their successful defense of Malacañang ensured that decency and the rule of law would prevail over naked ambition, immorality and self interest.

Second, we condemn the "learned elders" who incited the EDSA crowd to march to Malacañang. To the ordinary observer it is difficult not to deduce that this was a well planned action when one considers that street gangs intoxicated or high on drugs led the attack on Malacañang.

We condemn in no uncertain terms statements accusing the defenders of Malacañang of brutality and unnecessary force. What in fact took place was supreme maximum tolerance in the face of a frenzied and dangerous mob.

In the same breath, we ask ourselves what kind of human beings would use children and the less informed people as human shields while keeping an incessant barrage of verbal provocation and physical assaults on the defenders of Malacañang. Surely, the motive was clear. They wanted the defenders to open fire and kill the innocents in order to raise a nationwide public outcry against the Macapagal-Arroyo administration and then use the ensuing public indignation as a springboard to overthrow the legitimate government and install themselves in power.

We bow our heads in prayer as we condole with the family of the slain police officer who gallantly gave up his life in the line of duty.

In this light, we call upon the public to realize that there are indeed decent and upright police officers.

We also reach out to the injured police and military officers who so courageously gave of themselves knowing fully well that the ultimate sacrifice was the price they could have paid in the performance of their duty.

We also condole with the families of the "innocent pawns" who were wasted and abandoned by the "learned elders".

Our neighboring countries have left us far behind. The "learned elders" owe this country and our children a blood debt for continuously depriving all of us the opportunity to progress. We now have another chance under the Macapagal-Arroyo administration which has shown determination to uphold the rule of law and plant the seeds for a nationwide moral rearmament.

Let us nurture the little we have left and join hands in rebuilding our country by putting the nation above self day to day and minute by minute.

Ang Pahayag Ng Isang Mamamayan : Ako'y Puno Na ! Ako'y May Karapatang Magsalita!

Sa harap ng mga pangyayari, aming dinidiklara ang isang damdamin na ang paglabas at maglahad ng isang pahayag ay isang makataong paraan. Marami sa atin ang tumugon sa pangangailangan na magbigay ng opinyon sa nakakahiyang insidente na nangyari noong madaling araw ng ika 1 ng Mayo 2001.

Una, gusto naming ipahayag ang aming paghanga sa kagitingan at disiplina ng ating sandatahang lakas ng Pilipinas at ng polisya higit sa lahat ang mga opisyal, mga kalalakihan at kababaihan sa kanilang matagumpay na pagtatangol sa Malacañang, sinigurado na ang disente at naaayon sa batas ay mananaig laban sa huwad na ambisyon, imoralidad at pang sariling kapakanan.

Pangalawa, ikinokondina namin ang mga "learned elders" na nagtulak sa mga tao sa EDSA na mag martsa papuntang Malacañang. Sa ordinaryong taga masid, mahirap isipin na ito ay hindi planadong pag kilos kung ang isang batayan ay ang mga namumuno sa grupong ito ay yung mga taong nasa impluwensya ng ipinagbabawal na gamot ang namuno sa paglusob papunta sa Malacañang.

Kinokondina din namin ang maling akusasyon sa mga tagapagtangol at nagbantay ng palasyo na di umanoy naghasik ng di makataong pamamaraan upang mapigilan ang paglusob sa palasyo. Ang nangyari noong araw na iyon ay isang pagpapakita lamang ng sukdulang pagpapasensya sa harap ng kaguluhan at mapaglabang grupo.

Sa iisang paniwala, tanungin natin ang ating mga sarili kung anong klaseng mga tao ang gagamit sa mga bata at sa mga taong walang kaalaman bilang pansangga habang naghahasik ng kaguluhan laban sa mga tagapagtangol ng Malacañang. Sigurado na ang motibo ay malinaw. Gusto nila na ang mga tagapagtangol ay mamaril at pumatay ng mga inosenteng tao para sa ganon ay magalit ang buong bansa laban sa pamahalaang Macapagal-Arroyo para mapatalsik ang lihitimong gobyerno at ilagay ang kanilang sarili sa kapangyarihan.

Tayo'y manalangin at makiramay sa pamilya ng napaslang na opisyal ng pulisya na magiting na nag-alay ng kanyang buhay sa oras ng tungkulin.

Kami ay nananawagan sa publiko na maliwanagan sana sila na mayroon pa ring disente at matinong mga pinuno na alagad ng batas.

Pinaaabot din namin ang aming lubos na paghanga sa mga pulis at sundalo na nasugatan habang ginagampanan ang kanilang tungkulin bagamat alam nila na ito ay magiging kapalit ng kanilang buhay.

Kami rin ay nakikiramay sa mga pamilya ng mga inosenteng taong ipinain, pinabayaan at inabandona ng mga "learned elders".

Tayo ay nalampasan na ng ating mga karatig bansa. Ang mga "learned elders " na ito ay may pananagutan sa ating bansa at sa ating mga anak. Sa patuloy na pagkakait sa atin ng pag-asang umasenso.

Tayo ngayon ay mayroon ng pagkakataon sa ilalim ng pamahalaang Macapagal-Arroyo na nagpakita ng determinasyon na itaguyod ang maayos na pamamalakad ng batas at ang pagtanim ng simulain tungo sa magandang moralidad ng ating bansa.

Pagkaingatan natin lahat ang munting kayamanan na natitira pa at magkapit bisig tayong lahat na nasa isipan natin ang kapakanan ng ating bansa bago ang sarili para sa ganoon muli nating maumpisahan ang pagbuo at pag-unlad ng ating inang bayan.

Adriano Gaddi
Alan Alipao
Alicia Qua Hiansen
Amily B. Cesista
Ana Patricia Makalinao
Antonio Castillo Jr.
Arnaldo Cuenca
Arnel Ferrer
Arnon L. Rivera
Baby Flores
Bong Murga
Carlos A. Pedrosa
Maria B. Pedrosa
Carlos Martin Tayag
Charo Clemente
Coreen Cancio
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Eleanor B. Rivera
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Emily Hayudini
Enrique Clemente
Gari M. Tiongco
Geline Valencia
Grace Artuz
Irish Dandan
Joanne Peñaranda
John Kriskin Cardenas
John Rocha
Ana Omac

Jolly Padilla
Jose Alfredo L. Villanueva
Joy Mamhot
Juan Jose Berenguer-Testa
Kathy Manuel
Leslie W. Espino
Lewie Rivato
Magdaleno B. Albarracin Jr.
Luis De Vega
Maria Victoria Cajucom Cortes
Maria Victoria Marquez
Marian Rexene Gaviola
Maricel Lim
Marilen Bautista
Mark Joseph De Vega
Marmi Perez
Mary Anne Sarmiento
Mary Rhemses Tolentino
Michael Espejo
Miguel F. Uy
Milwy T. Reyes
Narciso A. Padojinog
Noel Sarmiento
Noemi Rivato
Pete Malabanan
Primo B. Aguas
Rafael B. Rodriguez
Ramil De Leon
Ramon L. Cuerva
Ramon Mendoza
Lito Buñag
Peachy Buñag
Randy T. Kier

Ray Hayudini
Remy Miranda
Robert Caraan
Rodelio Arcilla
Ronald Bernal
Sheryn Santos
Teresa Cuerva Ferrer
Tirso C. Abad
Virgilio Lagunilla
Wilfrido V. Garcia
Renato de Venecia Lim
Arnold F. Cordero
Toboy de Guzman
Ricky Cuenca
Rey Anthony David
Candy Espejo
Aimee Jose
Rachel Reyes
Cheche Gatmaitan
Ryan Espejo
Alex Lorenzo
Arlyn Davao
Cristobal Adia
Rodel Adia
Shyla Crisostomo
Wally Crisostomo
Sherley Reyes
Vanessa Honrada
Orlando Castañeda
Darwin Honrada
Ian Bautista
Ryan Rodriguez
Imelda Marcon
Norman Mendoza

Jonathan Roxas
Cora Rodriguez
Michael Arnaiz
Arlene Co
Remy Feliciano
Edna Sayson
Rodel dela Cruz
Avel dela Cruz
Sandy Mercado
Gilbert Lim
Alex Ramos
Yayo Wriz
Elenita Lorenzo
Timi de Leon
Bojie de Leon
Cristine Rivato
Katkat Rivato
Kayle Rivato
Ella Rivato
Paulo Rivato
Patrick Rivato
Elaine Suarez
Eajay Suarez
Brendan Nicolas Nepomuceno
Aiai Nepomuceno
Belandre Nepomuceno
JA Suarez
Ederson Suarez
Pia Manansala
Jefferson Manansala
Gabriel Manansala
Kim Espejo
Michelle Reyes
Ira Funelas

Jasmin Forires
Shella Funelas
Rona Funelas
Rhea Funelas
Sandy Reyes
Randy Reyes
Normi Reyes
Nomer Reyes
Rodel Tayag
Martin Buñag
Alfredo Cruz
Kathy Reyes
Keyle Limano
Apple dela Vega
Marvha Kapio
Garry Basa
Jonjon Basa
Abigail Lorenzo
Arian Lorenzo
Ramil dela Vega
Jalon Manialac
Michael Espejo
Ronald Castillo
Luis dela Vega
Camille dela Rosa
Rossel Lara
Nono Vergara
Benj Abraham
Lenlen Reyes
Chel Reyes
Mark Monte
Dong Bernardo
Michael Reyes

Monica Reyes
Ian Reyes
Kelvin Rivato
Mae Reyes
Kimberly Reyes
Mico Mani
Alice Enriquez
Gina Tiosto
Carol Garcia
Elen Nazareno
Cristin Hilario
Michi Lopez
Sylvia Lopez
Sandra Gomez
Maricel Buenaventura
Al Ponce
Tony Aquino
Shirley Lallana-Banglt
Cris Santos
Dennis Santos
Lito Pabriaga
Joey Cruz
Roden Perez
Garry Perez
Marlon Galang
Dennis Tan
Richie de Guzman
Elena del Rosario
Malou Yonzon
Beth Tablarte
Cathy Pabustan
Michelle Caulina
Beth Bautista

DANIEL ESPAYO

UNEVEN MATCH

Students from various universities in Luzon test their strength against bulls during a recent rodeo in Masbate City. The match between man and beasts, however, always turns out in favor of the former.

Win assured for unopposed Luzon bets

BY THE PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU AND CENTRAL LUZON DESK

BAGUIO CITY—Even before the first votes are cast on Monday, some candidates in Northern and Central Luzon are already assured of victory.

Among these candidates are the Marcos siblings of Ilocos Norte, two reelectionist congressmen in Pampanga and Bataan and two reelectionist governors in Central Luzon.

Ilocos Norte Gov. Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. and his sister Rep. Imee Marcos of the province's second district have no opponents in their reelection bids.

Rep. Juan Pablo Bondoc of Pampanga's fourth district and Rep. Enrique Garcia Jr. of Bataan's second district are running unopposed.

Bataan Gov. Leonardo Roman and Bulacan Gov. Josefina de la Cruz are running unopposed after the Commission on Elections disqualified their rivals for various reasons.

Ilocos region

In Ilocos Norte, aside from the Marcos siblings, six mayoral candidates in Ilocos Norte are also assured of victory, as they have no opponents. They are Benjamin Campañano of Burgos, Lairvee Espiritu of Dumalneg, Corazon Abad of Sarrat, Juanito Albano of Vintar, Jaime Abadilla of Banna and Clyde Garcia of Marcos town.

In Ilocos Sur, reelectionist Mayors Amparo Ciubal of Nagbukel and Benjamin Maggay of Cervantes are running unopposed.

In La Union, the unopposed candidates are reelectionist Mayor Arturo Valdriz of San Juan and vice mayoral candidate Nardy Valero of San Fernando City.

In Pangasinan, reelectionist Vice Gov. Oscar Lambino and four mayoral candidates are running unopposed.

The unopposed mayoral candidates are Antonio Villar Jr. of Sto. Tomas, Alice Pulido of Anda, Lito Zaplan of Sta. Barbara and Romulo Antolin of San Quintin.

Unopposed candidates in the Cordillera are mayoral candidates Thomas Killip of Sagada, Mt. Province; Eleanor Begtang of Calanasan, Apayao; Glenn Prudenciano of Alfonso Lista, Ifugao; Rogelio Leon of Kapangan, Benguet; and Jose Lagen Jr. of Villaviciosa, Abra.

Cagayan Valley

In Isabela, Rep. Faustino Dy Jr., a member of the Dy political clan, is running unopposed for governor after his erstwhile opponent, former Angadanan Mayor Manuel Syquian was disqualified by the Comelec.

Syquian had filed a motion for reconsideration before the Comelec *en banc*.

Isabela vice gubernatorial candidate Santiago Respicio is also running unopposed.

Mayoral bets in Isabela who have no opponents are Natividad Bernardo of Palanan, Romeo Pulig of San Guillermo, Miriam Masigan-Martinez of Sta. Maria, Thomas Pua Jr. of Delfin Albano, Panchito Pua of Luna, Jesus Miranda of San Mariano and Mila Albano of Cabagan.

In Nueva Vizcaya, reelectionist Mayor Nuepe Manuel Sr. of Ambaguio town is running unopposed.

In Bataan, aside from Roman and Garcia, the unopposed candidates are vice gubernatorial bet Rogelio Roque and mayoral bets Albert Garcia of Balanga City and Liberato Santiago Jr. of Abucay town.

In Bulacan, only reelectionist Mayor Anacleto Meneses of Bulacan town is running unopposed. *Reports from Cristina Arzadon, Leoncio Balbin Jr., Peter La. Julian, Desiree Caluza, Ben Moses Ebreo, Villamor Visaya Jr., Estanislao Caldez, Yolanda Fuertes, Pamela Herrera and Abigail Pajarito, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau and Tonette Orejas, Greg Refraccion, Anselmo Roque, Carmela Reyes, Ansbert Joaquin and Russell Arador, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Cheap rice for farmers

TACLOBAN CITY—Here's a piece of good news for coconut farmers who are still reeling from the effects of the low prices of copra.

About 160,000 coconut farmers in Eastern Visayas may now buy rice from the National Food Authority (NFA) at discounted rates.

The NFA, with the Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA) and the Department of Agriculture (DA), launched on Friday the Coconut Farmers Food Access Program (Coffap) in Barangay San Isidro, Liloan town, Southern Leyte.

Fifty coconut farmers from the towns of Liloan, Pintuyan and San Francisco, all in Southern Leyte, attended the launching.The coconut farmers can acquire their ''passports'' for free from any NFA office in the region.*Cynthia Borgueta, PDI Visayas Bureau*

Ballots to arrive under heavy guard

BACOLOD CITY—The more than three million ballots for Western Visayas will arrive under heavy military guard next week and has not been delayed in transit.

Victor Gaborne, Commission on Elections assistant regional director, yesterday gave this assurance to correct a statement of his subordinate on the delay of the ballots' arrival.

On Thursday, Negros Occidental provincial elections supervisor Cirilo Nala had said that the ballots had been shipped through a private forwarder to Negros Occidental last Monday and were supposed to arrive in 24 hours but were delayed in transit.

Gaborne, however, said the ballots are very important documents that cannot just be shipped through a forwarder.

He said there was nothing unusual with the decision to ship here the ballots next week yet since ballots are traditionally sent to their destinations five days before the election "for security reasons."

He said representatives from contending political parties might also accompany the shipment of the ballots.

Of the more than 3 million ballots for Western Visayas, 1.2 million are for Negros Occidental.

Gabome said the Comelec *en banc* has ordered that provincial elections supervisors and election officers of highly urbanized cities will themselves have to go to Manila to get the official ballots, election returns, certificates of canvass and proclamation forms for their respective areas.

The election officials will be accompanied by military escorts and contending political parties may send representatives to witness the shipment, Gaborne said.

Negros Occidental provincial treasurer Enrique Pinongan said what arrived so far are election posters, certified lists of candidates and party-list groups, and other paraphernalia needed for the elections. *Carla Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau*

CAMPAIGN TRAIL

DrugWatch appeals for free treatment to poor drug users

THE DRUGWATCH party-list group foresees more violent and senseless crimes in the barangay level as the number of drug users in the country continues to increase and the access of these victims to affordable treatment shrinks further.

In a statement, DrugWatch nominees Susan Ople and Reynaldo Jaylo said they had to issue an urgent appeal to the doctors of the NBI Rehabilitation Center in Tagaytay City to accommodate a 15-year-old drug user who wanted to voluntarily submit for treatment.

"We need to increase the capacity of our government rehabilitation centers and provide more information about the rehabilitation process to concerned parents," the two nominees said.

They said that there is a long waiting list of drug users awaiting treatment in both the PNP Narcotics Group Drug Treatment Center in Bicutan and the NBI Center in Tagaytay City.

Ople expressed concern that as a result of inadequate treatment facilities, most parents continue to harbor their drug-addicted children at home, increasing the risks of violence occurring at home and in the community.

"Based on police records, there is a correlation between drug use and violent crimes," she said.

The DrugWatch party-list group called on the government to include drug treatment and rehabilitation as an integral part of its anti-drugs campaign, considering the epidemic proportions of shabu use among Filipinos.

The group said it was imperative that poor families are given assistance in helping their children get proper treatment.

"Addiction is a disease that can be treated. Unfortunately, there is very little effort to reach out to families whose children have become drug users. Many of these families are indigent and cannot afford to enter their children in private rehabilitation centers," the DrugWatch nominees said in their statement.

To date, there are more than 2,000 patients at the PNP Narcotics Group facility in Bicutan and at least 400 patients at the NBI Rehabilitation Center in Tagaytay City. The Bicutan center is still open to patients while the NBI Rehabilitation Center is now full and has slowed down in admitting new patients.

DrugWatch is a non-government organization created 11 years ago to help fight drug abuse. Among its programs is a free drug counseling and referral service for indigent drug users.

Bet holds 'Lone Ranger' campaign

COTABATO CITY—An independent congressional candidate is not only campaigning by himself in Maguindanao's second district, he also holds his own voter's education campaign.

"I have to educate our people on how to elect the right leaders," said Datu Ali Sangki, who is running for a House seat in the second congressional district of Maguindanao under Aksyon Demokratiko.

Sangki said Maguindanao.voters traditionally elect leaders simply because they are related by blood or by affinity.

"Actually, there's nothing wrong with it but if a voter knows his candidate-relative is not capable and corrupt, he should choose the right one," Sangki said.

It has been observed in Maguindanao that voters prefer to elect a relative "even if he is corrupt and has not done anything good for the people," Sangki, a three-term provincial board member, said.

"It must be corrected and it should be done now," he added.

"Look at Maguindanao, it is among the 20 poorest provinces of the country partly because people elected the wrong people," he said.

Sangki urged the National Movement for Free Elections and the Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting to also tell voters that blood relations are not the only criteria in choosing leaders.

Edwin Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau

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- Federation of People's Sustainable Development Cooperatives (FPSDC)
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- National Market Vendors Confederation of Cooperatives (NAMVECOC)
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- Philippine Federation of Credit Cooperatives (PFCC)
- Philippine Federation of Women in Cooperatives (PFWC)
- Philippine Rural Electric Cooperatives Association of the Philippines (PHILRECA)
- Philac Service Cooperative (PHILAC)

Regional Cooperative Organizations
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- Cagayan Valley Confederation of Cooperatives (CAVALCO)
- MINDANAO Alliance of Self-Help Societies – Southern Philippines Education Cooperative Center (MASS-SPECC)
- National Capital Region League of the Philippine Federation of Credit Cooperatives (NCR League)
- Northern Luzon Federation of Cooperatives and Development Center (NORLUCEDEC)
- Tagalog Cooperative Development Center (TAGCODEC)
- Visayas Cooperative Development Center (VICTO)

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- NUWHRAIN Development Cooperative (NUWDECO)
- Paco-Soriano-Pandacan Development Cooperative
- Philippine Army Finance Center Integrated Producers Cooperative (PAFCPIC)
- PLDT Employees' Service Cooperative
- Project 4 Development Cooperative
- United Methodist Church Multi-Purpose Cooperative, Inc.
- U.P. Employees Housing Cooperatives (UPEHCO)
- Valenzuela Development Cooperative

In three days, two parties collide.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER and GMA7 will make it happen.

Homegrown political parties test their mettle on May 14

BY ANSELMO ROQUE
in Nueva Ecija
AND LEONCIO BALBIN JR.
in Ilocos Sur

HOMEGROWN parties in the regions have proven their clout among local voters in the past elections. On May 14, these parties, like the Bagong Lakas ng Nueva Ecija (Balane) identified with the Joson clan of Nueva Ecija, and the Bileg party of Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson will again test their mettle as they face giant political parties.

Ranged against such political parties as the Lakas-NUCD-UMDP, Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino, Liberal Party, Balane is a David in terms of manpower, logistics, reach and big supporters.

But in Nueva Ecija, Balane is a Goliath as it is the party to reckon with in the province.

In fact, since its establishment in 1987, Balane has scored major political victories after bagging plum elective posts in the province.

The late Gov. Eduardo Joson, who was forced out of power in 1987 after he was replaced by OIC Gov. Emmanuel Santos, formed the party as the newly-ratified Constitution allowed the multi-party system.

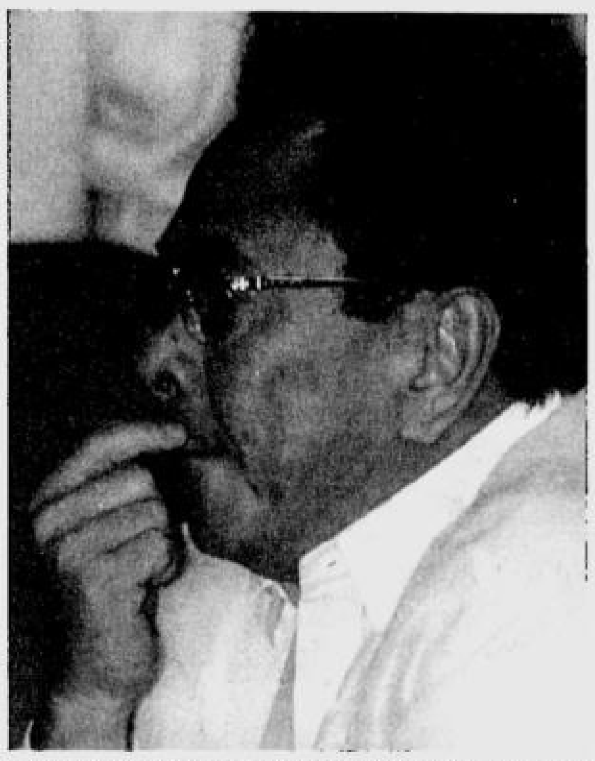
Sources said Joson, the family patriarch, at once approved the suggested name for the new party and its acronym "Balane," that sounded like the Filipino word "*balani*" which means magnet.

Joson was then holding office in the compound of the family-owned Nueva Ecija Cold Storage and Ice Plant (Necosip) cum cockpit arena in Cabanatuan City. In consultation with his supporters, the party's constitution and by-laws were formed and the party was soon registered with the Commission on Elections.

For the May 11, 1987 elections, Balane fielded as candidates for congressmen Joson's son Eduardo Nonato (Edno) for the first district, Jose Felimon of San Jose City for the second district, Manolette Ocampo of Cabanatuan City for the third district and Julius Villareal for the fourth district.

In the local elections of Jan. 18, 1988, Joson regained his seat as governor winning against Santos. His running mate Narciso Nario, together with Joson's son, Tomas, who was fielded for a provincial board member seat, also won handily.

TOMAS Joson III: Keeping the Joson dynasty alive in Nueva Ecija.



CHAVIT Singson: Suddenly a hero for betraying a corrupt friend.

Joson's fifth son, Danding, was fielded for vice mayor of Cabanatuan City and won. Joson's opponent, the slain Honorato Perez, won the mayoral post of Cabanatuan City.

On Aug. 9, 1990, Joson died, leaving behind a history of more than three decades of being governor and political kingpin of the province. The party he formed, after his death, was predicted to flounder.

Succeeding elections, however, proved, that it became stronger with Tomas, the eldest of the six children of the late governor, carrying the brunt of keeping the banner of Balane high.

Tomas ran for governor and won by a landslide while he was detained in Camp Crame. He and brother Mariano Cristino, then mayor of Quezon town, were named as co-principals in the 1995 slaying of Perez, then running for governor, and his aide. (The cases against the Josons, and the nine other co-accused, were later dismissed by the court).

His brother, Eduardo IV, also won as vice governor, so with Mariano Cristino, as mayor of Quezon, and Mariano Cristino's wife, Josefina, as representative of the third district.

Where does Balane get its strength? Where does it get its funds?

Political observers in Nueva Ecija said the party's being confined to the province worked to its advantage as it could be managed well. Also, much discipline is enforced in the party.

But above all, the party gets its strength from the Josons: The party is as strong as the Josons. As long as the Josons are there, the Balane party stays.

As for funding, observers can only guess. For one, the party has a standing coalition with former Ambassador Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco Jr.'s Nationalist People's Coalition. Also, several national candidates have been said to be courting Balane for support.

For this year's elections, Balane has complete lineups for various elective posts in the province. The party faces the ruling Lakas-NUCD that has equally complete lineups of candidates for local elective posts.

Rep. Pacifico Fajardo of Lakas, a cousin of President Macapagal-Arroyo, is challenging Tomas' reelection bid. Tomas' eldest son, Edward Thomas, has been fielded for the post of congressman of the third district of Nueva Ecija.

Fajardo's wife, Palayan City Mayor Leonora Fajardo, and three other hopefuls are challenging Edward Thomas' bid.

The downfall of deposed President Joseph Estrada has been observed here as a big loss for Balane as Tomas is a known ally of the ousted president.

The big question now is: Can Balane bring to victory many of its candidates for the different elective posts as it used to do in the past?

The question can only be answered definitively as soon as the smoke of the current election battle clears up.

Bileg

The vaunted Bileg (Ilocano term for strength or power) party of outgoing Ilocos Sur Gov. Chavit Singson would be put into a test on May 14.

Singson is hoping that by using Bileg as the political machinery of his chosen candidates led by his anointed bets—Vice Gov. Deogracias Victor Savellano for governor and his younger brother Board Member Jeremias Singson for vice governor—he would hold on to his political dominance.

"Bileg party is the most dominant party in the province as it reaches the grassroots," Singson, the party's founding chair, told the INQUIRER in Ilocano. "It is more than enough for the candidates under the party to win in the May 14 elections."

Singson, who was the star witness during the aborted impeachment trial of his erstwhile friend Estrada, has been the political kingpin of Ilocos Sur for three decades now. But the governor did not seek any elective position this year and had promised to retire from politics.

Bileg, which was formed by Singson before the 1998 elections, had been on a massive recruitment binge lately in preparation for the May 14 elections.

Sources said Singson formed Bileg after he failed to get the nomination of the Lakas-NUCD as its official candidate for governor in 1998. His second cousin, former Rep. Eric Singson, got the Lakas nomination but lost to him.

Bileg now has established chapters in nearby Abra and some provinces in Cagayan Valley.

Former Narvacan Mayor Edgar Zaragoza, a critic of Singson, admitted that Bileg has many followers but doubted its dominance.

"They are not the majority" said Zaragoza. He said most mayors in Ilocos Sur's second district are not members of Bileg and he expected them not to switch allegiance after the elections.

However, there are factors favoring Bileg.

One is that Singson had been hailed by many of his province mates as a "living hero" for being the spark that led to the ouster of his former bosom friend and drinking buddy Estrada. This popularity, observers said, could well translate into votes for Bileg.

Another is that his party's strongest rival, the group led by Eric Singson, did not field bets for governor and vice governor.

Singson admitted that he had accepted the reconciliation offer of Eric but said he would still campaign and support his candidates under Bileg.

There are some things, however, that are seen to work against the party. One of these is that Singson would not carry Bileg's banner this year and his candidate, Savellano, is not the most popular choice among Bileg leaders.

Bileg leaders initially preferred the tandem of Board Members Jeremias Singson and Efren "Rambo" Rafanan but Singson reportedly prevailed upon the leaders to field Savellano and Jeremias.

Rafanan, one of Singson's former closest political allies, had worked closely for the organization of Bileg during the 1998 elections until the two leaders broke ties recently.

Rafanan, under tremendous pressure to run by his 15,000-member Community Information and Assistance (CIA) and other sectors, defied Singson and sought the gubernatorial post against Savellano.

"I am up against 10 Goliaths," Rafanan said. "I am leaving my faith to the Ilocano voters who have been supporting me all the way."

Another problem that may get in the way of Bileg's victory in the polls are allegations of graft hurled against Singson by the Save Ilocos Sur Alliance and the Integrated Bar of the Philippines' Ilocos Sur chapter.

The ethnic color of Benguet politics

BY MAURICE MALANES
Benguet

DESPITE threats such as the May 1 power grab attempt at the Malacañang gates, upland folk in Benguet are upbeat about the coming elections, excited to see the result of a kind of politics based on the arithmetic of ethnic division.

Benguet (voting pop: 124,750) has two major ethnic groups—the Kankana-ey and the Ibaloi.

These ethnic differences often heighten during elections because Benguet politics is by large and simple arithmetic.

To illustrate, the Ibaloi towns of Bokod, Itogon, Kabayan, Sablan, Tuba and Tublay have a total voting population of 58,959 while the Kankana-ey towns of Bakun, Buguias, Kapangan, Kibungan and Mankayan have 48,726.

La Trinidad, Benguet's capital town, has a mix of Kankana-ey, Ibaloi tribes and even migrants from the lowlands and other Benguet towns and Cordillera provinces, and has the biggest voting population—27,796.

Migrants

Although originally Ibaloi-dominated, La Trinidad is turning out to be dominated by Kankana-ey and the migrants, sweeping to power non-Ibaloi politicians such as reelectionist Mayor Nestor Fongwan and rival John Botiwey, both Kankana-ey.

Another town with both Kankana-ey and Ibaloi population is Atok, which has 7,253 voters

So if Benguet voters will vote according to ethnic lines, which they have done so in past elections, the mathematical probability is quite predictable.

This explains why the rivals from the congressional down to the vice gubernatorial seats come from each of the two ethnic groups.

All eyes are now set at how returning former Rep. Samuel Dangwa (Reporma-Lapiang Manggagawa), a Kankana-ey, will fare against reelectionist and Ibaloi Ronald Cosalan (Lakas-NUCD) in the one-on-one congressional race.

Neck-to-neck

Local analysts predict a neck-to-neck race between the two candidates in the lone congressional district. Earlier, however, Dangwa's camp was worried when lawyer and Cordillera College law dean Agapito Bolislis, a Kankana-ey, filed his candidacy.

Knowing how Bolislis' candidacy can adversely affect and divide Benguet's Kankana-ey vote, Dangwa was even willing to give way to Bolislis.

Bolislis agreed to withdraw his candidacy on April 4 on condition that Dangwa, if elected, would carry some of Bolislis' platforms, one of which is a scholarship program for poor but intellectually deserving students.

Bolislis' entry into the congressional race could have challenged a political landscape long dominated by the Dangwas and the Cosalans.

Tandem

Pairing a Kankana-ey and an Ibaloi candidate in the gubernatorial and vice gubernatorial positions has been the tradition in Benguet politics for obvious reasons.

A Kankana-ey-Ibaloi tandem will help ensure that both candidates can get votes both from the Kankana-ey and Ibaloi communities.

Re-electionist Gov. Raul Molintas, an Ibaloi, for example, has picked as running mate former La Trinidad Mayor Edna Tabanda, a Kankana-ey-Ibaloi. The same is true with gubernatorial challenger Vice Gov. Robert Tindaan, a Kankana-ey, who is running with Manuel Cuilan, an Ibaloi from the vote-rich mining town of Itogon.

Excluding perennial gubernatorial candidate and loser Bedis Guznian, the gubernatorial race is practically a one-on-one race between Tindaan (Lakas-NUCD-UMDP) and Molintas (Nationalist People's Coalition). So Benguet folk are excited to see whether the next governor or congressman is a Kankana-ey or an Ibaloi.

CL politicians stick like leeches to power

BY TONETTE OREJAS
Pampanga

FIVE of 19 congressional representatives in Central Luzon have completed their three terms. Four of them are, however, not leaving politics yet, setting their sights in the meantime on local positions.

Bulacan Rep. Pedro Pancho of the second district is aspiring to be mayor of Baliuag town; Bulacan Rep. Ricardo Silverio of the third district wants to be mayor of San Rafael town; Nueva Ecija Rep. Pacifico Fajardo as governor of Nueva Ecija; and Zambales Rep. Antonio Diaz as governor of Zambales.

Wives and husbands are switching roles.

Like Sarmiento's wife Evangelina, San Rafael Mayor Lorna Silverio is seeking the congressional seat that her husband is vacating. Rep. Sarmiento is not seeking any elective post this year.

Nueva Ecija Rep. Julita Villareal-Lorenzo, although just on her way to a third term, has instead fielded her husband Raul to run for her post.

Eight representatives are seeking their second terms while four are aspiring for their third terms.

Moneyed league

The House of Representative is a league of millionaires.

Based on his declared assets of P80 million, Tarlac Rep. Gilberto Teodoro Jr., a scion of the Cojuangco clan, is the richest of Central Luzon congressmen. In contrast, his cousin, Tarlac Rep. Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III, declared an asset of P10 million.

Having P4.9 million, Pampanga Rep. Oscar Rodriguez may be considered the "poorest" among the region's congressmen.

Except for Sarmiento who declared having a condominium, although he listed two property development firms to his name, all representatives in the region own more than two, many up to five, real estate property acquired mostly while they held public office. Most have houses in plush subdivisions in Metro Manila.

Pampanga Rep. Juan Pablo Bondoc owns as much as 12 real estate property, most of them obtained through inheritance from his Puyat relatives.

Not quite a few, like Bataan Rep. Antonino Roman, did not state the year when their property were purchased. Roman, for instance, has landholdings valued at P33 million.

Just a word of caution: Statements of assets and liabilities do not tell all about the actual wealth of public officials.

Insofar as business interests were concerned, much of them are into real estate development. Seven did not declare where their business interests lie.

Bondoc and Aquino are into diverse businesses. Bondoc is largely a stockholder. Aquino did not state the nature of his participation in firms that he belonged to.

Villareal-Lorenzo did not declare the assets or the business interest of her family in the Lorenzo Construction and Development that last year garnered a controversial contract from the National Irrigation Administration.

Business interests and the task of legislating laws do mix.

For example, Pancho, who is into flour and sugar trading, has filed national bills that pertain to the regulation of the procurement or import of these products.

Six of the congressional representatives practice law. The rest either finished commerce, accounting, business administration, political science or economics.

Tarlac Rep. Jesli Lapus has a doctorate degree in public administration. Teodoro, Bondoc and Roman obtained higher courses in prestigious universities in the United States.

Very few took advanced studies to upgrade their skills. Six ventured in local politics before they became legislators.

The rest spent many years with private companies either as proprietors of their businesses or executives in firms.

Families

The Aquinos and Cojuangcos are families entrenched in national and local politics. Aquino III has six relatives occupying positions in government.

They are his uncle Makati Rep. Agapito "Butz" Aquino, aunt Sen. Teresita Aquino-Oreta, grandfather Tarlac Vice Gov. Herminio Aquino, uncle Tarlac Rep. Jesli Lapus, uncle Antipolo Rep. Victor Sumulong and aunt Cecilia David who is the House of Representatives' deputy secretary for administration.

Noynoy's own parents were in politics. His father, the late Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr., was a senator and his mother Corazon Aquino served as the country's president from 1986 to 1992. His Uncle Jose "Peping" Cojuangco Jr. was a former congressman while his aunt Margarita "Tingting" Cojuangco was Tarlac's former governor.

His late grandfather Melicio Cojuangco was a congressman until 1910.

Teodoro's cousin Carlos Cojuangco is congressman of Negros Occidental while his cousin-in-law and Carlos' wife Rio Diaz-Cojuangco is vice mayor of Pontevedra, Negros Occidental.

Nueva Ecija Rep. Josefina Manuel Joson married into the formidable Joson clan in Nueva Ecija. Her husband Mariano Cristino is mayor of Quezon town. Her brother-in-law Tomas III is governor.

Fajardo's wife Leonora is mayor of Palayan City, also in Nueva Ecija.

Zambales Rep. James Gordon Jr. also took the path of politics his slain father James Sr. and mother Amelia took.

Gordon's sister-in-law Katherine is mayor of Olongapo City while his brother Richard, former Olongapo mayor and chair of the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority, is now tourism secretary.

Like the Cojuangcos, feud runs among the Magsaysays who continue to reign in Zambales politics.

Diaz, the nephew of late President Ramon Magsaysay, is challenging his cousin Vicente Magsaysay for the gubernatorial post.

Many of the Central Luzon representatives have hired their relatives in Congress.

Bataan Rep. Enrique Garcia, for instance, has engaged the services of his wife, two brothers, daughter, nephew and niece in his office.

Garcia's son Albert is mayor of Balanga City.

Performance

Rodriguez filed the most national bills, at 42. Joson and Bondoc filed none.

For yet unknown reasons, Silverio and Bondoc had the most absences to their records, at 69 and 60, respectively.

Teodoro, Aquino, Rodriguez and Gordon rarely made themselves absent during sessions.

Documents obtained do not indicate the actual number of days they spent working in their districts.

In terms of vote record, most Central Luzon representatives voted yes to 20 laws passed by the 11th Congress.

However, the votes they cast on Republic Act 8762 or the Retail Trade Liberalization Act of 2000 that opened the retail business to foreign ownership, were diverse.

Garcia and Gordon rejected the act, eight approved it, eight did not vote on it while Aquino abstained.

In deciding on the impeachment trial of deposed President Joseph Estrada, 10 Central Luzon representatives endorsed the filing of the articles of impeachment while nine rejected it.

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Cory to Gloria: Us girls don't run from plotters

(From page A1)

who toughed out seven military coups against her administration from 1986 to 1992.

She might as well be speaking for President Macapagal-Arroyo and to the plotters who tried to topple her administration last week.

"We don't leave Malacañang unlike the others," she bantered, no doubt, referring to ex-President Joseph Estrada, who left the Palace when Edsa II demonstrators marched from the Edsa Shrine to Malacañang on Jan. 20 demanding for his resignation.

The former President couldn't help but point out that she and Ms Macapagal did not leave Malacañang when confronted by even the most serious attempts to oust them.

"(The late President Ferdinand) Marcos left immediately after only one coup attempt. President Macapagal's predecessor also did the same," she said. "Both of us women don't just leave where the seat of authority is and that is in Malacañang."

Ms Aquino was all praise for the President for handling the crisis "excellently."

"I would say it was perfectly done and I don't think any man or woman could have done it better," Ms Aquino told reporters at a People Power Coalition rally here Monday night.

She said the way Ms Macapagal handled the May 1 siege "erased every doubt" possessed by "some people who had questioned (her) capability."

"I think most Filipinos are very confident that she is President and giving us the kind of governance that we're looking for," Ms Aquino added.

Honasan again

The coup attempts were launched against Ms Aquino by rightist groups led by former military colonel and now Sen. Gregorio "Gringo" Honasan, who's among the suspected plotters in the overthrow of the Macapagal administration.

Ms Aquino said that the recent events were "déjà vu" for her as she called on Honasan and former national police chief, Panfilo Lacson, to stop their plotting.

"*Tama na ang pagpapahirap na ginagawa nila sa ating bayan* (Enough of what they're doing. They are making the country suffer)," she said.

Ms Aquino said that she was in Tarlac preparing for the PPC Labor Day rally in her hometown when she heard the news about the storming of the Palace by Estrada supporters.

Gazmin to the rescue

Two days earlier, she said the President called her up to tell her of the plan for a power grab. She called for Lt. Gen. Voltaire Gazmin, her former Presidential Security Group commander, and told him to go over to Malacañang and help Ms Macapagal thwart the plan.

"I told (Gazmin) he has become a veteran of coup attempts, so he went there and talked to the President and I think he was able to help them," Ms Aquino said.

When the police and military were able to disperse the massive assembly of Estrada supporters from Malacañang, she said she called up Ms Macapagal to congratulate her "for a job well done."

Ms Aquino was grateful that the outcome of the crisis was not as bloody as the coup attempts during her incumbency. At the same time, she expressed sympathy for the six persons who were killed and more than 100 others who were wounded in the failed siege on the Palace.

Vote PPC

With the elections only a few days away, she urged people to do their part in ensuring that the May 14 polls would be peaceful and orderly as well as to go out and vote.

To the hundreds of people that came to the PPC rally the other night, Ms Aquino appealed to them to vote for all 13 of its senatorial bets.

"Don't forget them, they are the ones who will fight for the country," she told her audience as she reminded them that the candidates' names stood for "Vot for D Chammp."

In a short speech she gave at the rally, Ms Aquino individually endorsed the candidates who were there—Wigberto Tañada, Liwayway Vinzons Chato, Manny Villar, Joker Arroyo, Juan Flavier, Ramon Magsaysay Jr., Obet Pagdanganan, Franklin Drilon, Francis Pangilinan and Ralph Recto.

PEOPLE POWER EQUATION:
1 + 12 = 13 - 0

for Perfecto R. Yasay

Kidlat ng Bayan, Katarungan Ipaglalaban!

Number one si Perfecto R. Yasay Jr. sa ticket ng People Power. Ang dahilan: Taglay niya ang diwa ng EDSA. Siya ang kandidato ng bayan.

Sino ba ang unang-unang public official na naninindigan at lumaban sa Rehimeng Estrada at walang takot na "star witness" sa Impeachment Proceedings? Ang batikang abogadong si Perfecto Yasay.

Sino ang tanging senatorial candidate na ginawaran ng Edsa People Power Freedom Award? Ang laging maaasahan na si Jun Yasay.

Iisa ang sigaw ng Bayan. Ang tunay na diwa ng Edsa Dos ay nasa People Power Equation: 1+12 = 13-0.

A Vote for Yasay is a 13-0 Vote.

Perfecto sa Senado.

GMA says worst . . .

(From page A1)

But the President, he said, was confident that the threat had been neutralized.

"She's saying the threat has subsided. The plotters are on the run and they are on the defensive now," he said.

Still, the President also believes that there's wisdom in keeping alert.

"What she meant is that we should remain vigilant. We can't let our guard down," Tiglao said.

He said there were reports two weeks ago that armed units were attempting to regroup.

He added that even with the lifting of the military alert from red to white, security and intelligence units were still on guard.

In an interview with radio dzMM, Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes said he also believed that "we have seen the worst."

"We are on the way to normalcy, but just the same, we maintain vigilance, and the military is always prepared for the worst scenario," Reyes said.

No Cabinet meeting

The President cancelled her weekly meeting yesterday with members of her official family and reset it for after the Monday elections.

"There's no urgent need to meet with the Cabinet," Tiglao said in explaining why the Cabinet meeting, held at 9 a.m. every Tuesday, did not take place.

"The President is very busy and so are her Cabinet members," he said.

Tiglao cited Social Welfare Secretary Corazon "Dinky" Soliman, who, he said, was in the thick of mobilizing government support for the poor.

The President also cancelled her weekly 2 p.m. press conference, which usually follows the Cabinet meeting.

But she held a series of interviews with foreign media outfits and local broadcasters, including an 11 a.m. interview with three Chinese news agencies that was "for in-house crew only," or not for coverage by local reporters assigned to Malacañang.

She also had a luncheon meeting with officials of the Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster sa Pilipinas.

At 2 p.m., the President was set to give an interview to Gary Thomas of the Voice of America, followed by another with Christopher Gunness of the BBC World Service Radio.

Her last three public engagements for the day were:

- A meeting with members of the Supreme Council of Bishops of the Iglesia Filipina Independiente led by Supreme Bishop Tomas A. Millamena at the State Dining Room.
- Testimonial cocktails with members of the Philippine Military Academy Class of 1970 at the Bahay Pangarap in Malacañang Park.
- A 7:30 p.m. "dinner" at the Palace's Rizal Room.

There was no statement on why the President had cocktails with PMA Class '70, whose members include Romeo Acop, Edgard Calvo, Roy Cimatu, Hermogenes Ebdane, Guillermo Parayno and Erwin Ver.

In the phone interview, Tiglao admitted that the President's interviews with the foreign media were meant to counter negative perceptions generated abroad by her declaration of a state of rebellion and crackdown on the suspected plotters of the May 1 assault on Malacañang.

"Well, because you see on TV the riots in Indonesia and some other places, and now it was being projected that there is chaos here (in the country)," he said.

Watching movies

According to Agence France Presse, the President's movie-watching schedule with her family was not disrupted by last week's failed power grab.

She was reported to have told visiting Chinese journalists that she always made it a point to be with her husband and three children despite her demanding job.

"I want to be with my family on Sundays, watching movies with them," a Malacañang statement quoted her as saying.

She said she recently watched the critically acclaimed Chinese movie "Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon."

"Oh, I loved it. It's beautiful," she said.

Last week, Ms Macapagal revealed an iron fist when she swiftly quelled a power grab by Estrada's supporters.

Calling in the military and the police, she dispersed about 50,000 Estrada loyalists who marched from the Edsa Shrine and attacked the Palace.

Apart from thanking the military, the police and the private sector for their help in crushing the pro-Estrada rebellion against her 100-day-old administration, Ms Macapagal has been reaching out to the poor and the supporters of her ousted predecessor.

She has visited demonstrators who were arrested and charged for the May 1 siege, as well as Estrada himself in his detention quarters at Fort Sto. Domingo in Sta. Rosa, Laguna.

But previously, she admitted she had lost a total of 20 pounds since assuming office in January, citing the pressures of running the country. ***With reports from AFP, AP***

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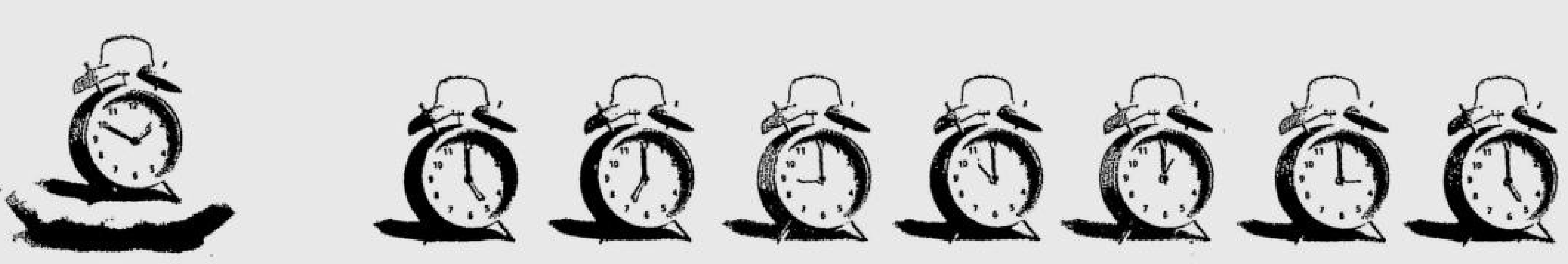

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5J - 563	Daily	0900	1010	5J - 564	Daily	1100	1210
5J - 565	Daily	1100	1210	5J - 566	Daily	1300	1410
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Nagkawasakan. Nagkanakawan.

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Dadalang ang mga dayuhang turista.

Rumupok ang pagkakaisa ng mga Pilipino.
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Pagkatapos, "nagpo-Poncio Pilato" ka.

Ngayon, Power Grabber, maligaya ka na ba?

Isang pagmumulat ng Diwa ng EDSA

Coup financiers named

(From page A1)

million), Chinese-Filipino businessmen in Metro Manila (P300 million) and Chinese-Filipino businessmen in Mindanao (P300 million), according to the report.

Jimenez allegedly shelled out P150 million for the senatorial candidates of the opposition's Puwersa ng Masa coalition. The money was reportedly given to Estrada eight hours before he was arrested for economic plunder on April 25.

The intelligence report said about P20 million a day, or a total of P100 million, was spent for the five-day rally of Estrada's supporters at the Edsa Shrine.

Opposition senatorial candidates goaded the tens of thousands of Estrada's supporters into marching on Malacañang.

The storming of Malacañang on Labor Day, which resulted in running battles between government forces and the death of six people, prompted Ms Macapagal to declare a state of rebellion in Metro Manila and to order the arrest without warrants of the alleged leaders of the attempt to topple her.

The report said P350 million was "specifically allotted to buy out" military and police officials so that they would "join the coup."

But only half of the P1-billion "coup budget" was accounted for, according to the report.

"The fund disbursement is one of the questions raised by the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino party under Edgardo Angara that primarily triggered the split of the rebellion forces," the report said.

The fund-raising in Manila was allegedly led by Henry Lim, owner of Steniel Paper Corp. and Sebastian Chua, owner of Star Paper Corp. David Lim, a prominent Cebu trader, led the fund-raising in the Visayas and Le Peng Wee in Mindanao.

These businessmen were primarily supporting the senatorial campaign of Lacson, a former PNP chief.

Pegasus and Lexus

Besides Lim and Chua, the Manila-based businessmen who allegedly funded the power grab were identified as Roberto Co, an importer of luxury vehicles; Eric Co, also an importer of luxury vehicles; David Tan, co-owner of Pegasus; and Jolly Tieng, co-owner of Lexus.

They were joined by Leo Chua, co-owner of Infinity; William Go, co-owner of Legend; William Keong, owner of Subic International and Development Corp.; Ramon Lee, corporate partner of Belle Resources; Manuel Tan, owner of Bulk Handlers Inc.; Kim Wong, owner of First Karaoke Bar and a certain Mr. Yu, owner of Sea Oil Resources.

Yu, who allegedly contributed P25 million, was engaged in oil smuggling, the report said.

"One of the sources of funds was from the close associates of former PNP boss Panfilo Lacson from Cebu and Bohol. These Chinese-Filipino businessmen contributed P250 million," the report said.

The businessmen based in Cebu and Bohol were identified in the report as David Lim, brother of Peter and Willy Lim.

David allegedly arranged and coordinated the fund-raising. The Lim brothers are suspected of involvement in rice and corn smuggling, according to the PNP report.

Douglas Lu Ym, John Young, Alberto and Ricky Cagang were allegedly aligned with this group. But the report did not categorically say that the three businessmen had given money to the coup plotters.

P150-million for Puwersa

The report said that "of the P150-million dole-out from Mark Jimenez, P10 million each for 11 senatorial candidates was given by Estrada, except Santanina Rasul and Jamby Madrigal. These funds were distributed approximately eight hours before Erap was arrested."

The report said a former ambassador to the United States, Ronnie Puno and Adelberto Antonio were reportedly being blamed for the disappearance of the P500 million.

It said the missing money made Lacson "mad at Ronnie Puno and his brother Dong Puno." Ronnie Puno is a former interior secretary while his brother Ricardo ("Dong"), a former press secretary, is a senatorial candidate of Puwersa.

Because of the missing money, one of the organizers of the Edsa rally could have been shortchanged, according to the report.

"Ronald Lumbao is very much aggrieved as he only received P2.5 million for the PMAP," the report said. Lumbao heads PMAP (People's Movement Against Poverty), one of the groups that supplied the warm bodies to the Edsa rally and assault of Malacañang.

Denials

Ramon Lee, owner of Filipinas Gaming Totalizator Co., a partner of Belle Corp. in the jai alai business, vehemently denied that he financed the siege of the presidential palace.

"The allegation that I'm one of the financiers of the May 1 violent demonstration is untrue, baseless and pure disinformation," said Lee, also a garment exporter.

"I may be a friend of the former President but I never involve myself in politics. I've been a businessman all my life and it's my policy not to be involved in any partisan politics, rallies or demonstrations," he said.

"The insinuation is unfair and unjust to me as it undermines the reputation that I've built in the business community."

Lee said it was not possible for him to have taken part in the bloody uprising on May 1 as it was his birthday. He disclosed that he was out of town then.

"God knows I'm not involved in it," he said.

In Zamboanga City, former presidential consultant on Mindanao economic affairs Lepeng Wee denied that he sent people to Manila to join the pro-Estrada rallies.

Wee, PDP-Laban's mayoralty candidate in Zamboanga City, said he would welcome an investigation of allegations that he paid people to go to Manila.

"If that is proven, I will withdraw my candidacy," Wee told the INQUIRER.

He said he was very busy in his campaign and had no time for such activity.

"It's already common knowledge that I was abandoned by Erap. I have no reason to do that (send people to Manila), although he had been my friend for a long, long time," Wee said.

Intelligence reports revealed that some 700 people from different parts of Mindanao, including Zamboanga, went to Manila. Estrada's followers allegedly financed the trip. ***With reports from Doris Dumlao in Manila and Jonathan F. Ma, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

AFTER Mendiola, President Macapagal has been doing the rounds of her allies. On Tuesday, she meets with the supreme council of bishops of the Iglesia Filipina Independiente. JOAN BONDOC

Cops call off manhunt for Ping, Gringo

(From page A1)

be put in his custody.

Pimentel told the INQUIRER that he would be in Manila today to meet with Justice Secretary Hernando Perez and Honasan's lawyers to discuss the final details of the arrangement.

He said the President had agreed to put Honasan in his custody while the ex-Army colonel responded to charges.

Pimentel also said Honasan would turn himself in along with six other persons being hunted for alleged involvement in the May 1 siege of Malacañang by Joseph Estrada's loyalists.

He did not name the six others.

But Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes cited reports indicating the continuing efforts of Honasan and Lacson, both part of the senatorial ticket of the Estrada-backed Puwersa ng Masa, to put up an armed force against the government.

"We know they are trying to tap members of the Guardians," Reyes told reporters in Camp Aguinaldo.

The Guardians is a fractious military-based group divided into 15 factions, with civilians comprising the majority of its members.

Honasan has repeatedly claimed in the past that only he could speak for the Guardians. He used this group in his failed coup attempts against the Aquino administration.

Reyes acknowledged that while Honasan and Lacson were on the run, they were capable of threatening the Macapagal administration.

But he immediately qualified: "They have that capability, but certainly it is not in the magnitude that will constitute a national security threat."

Also in Cagayan de Oro, People Power Coalition (PPC) senatorial candidate Ernesto Herrera told reporters that supporters of Honasan and Lacson were supposedly organizing a big army somewhere in the gold-mining community of Diwalwal in Monkayo, Compostela Valley.

Herrera said he had notified authorities of the report.

Legal advice

"We have an option to invoke the Rules of Court (Section 5 of Rule 113) for the warrantless arrests, but since we received legal advice from the Department of Justice and our lawyers, it is best that we abide by the proper court proceedings," Mendoza told the Inquirer.

Under the law, the suspected ringleaders may be arrested without warrants if they are caught "in the act of committing or attempting to commit a crime and if the arresting officer has a probable cause or personal knowledge of the crime that is about to be committed or is being committed."

Thus, Mendoza said, authorities would have to wait until Honasan, Lacson and others were charged with rebellion in court before arresting them.

"Honasan will be placed under my custody as president of the Senate," Pimentel said, adding that Honasan was willing to post bail if charges were filed against him.

He said Honasan contacted him last week and signified intention to surrender to authorities.

"Honasan trusts me. I have to uphold the law because I am the president of the Senate who is bound to protect all of its members," Pimentel said.

He said the stability of the Macapagal administration would be normalized in the next few days as soon as Honasan made good his promise to turn himself in.

In Davao City, Honasan's eldest son Kim Francis told the Inquirer in a phone interview that his father was willing to surface if government prosecutors made up their minds on the charge they would file against him.

Kim, 26, said his father went into hiding precisely because of this issue, and aired the senator's belief that authorities would only put him on indefinite detention if he decided to give up, as part of supposed efforts to stop him from campaigning.

"Once the charges are determined and he is be assured of due process, I'm sure he will come out," Kim said.

He denied that Honasan instigated or plotted the power grab, and said Honasan recognized the legitimacy of the Macapagal administration.

Kim also said the senator would not jeopardize his chances of winning in the May 14 elections, and cited surveys supposedly conducted both by the PPC and PnM indicating his inclusion in the "Magic 13."

Kim added that he and other members of the Honasan household also went into hiding starting yesterday after armed men were seen outside their townhouse at the upscale Ladislawa Village in Davao City.

Kim, a resident of the city, said he had received and confirmed reports last week that an armed group would abduct him if his father remained in hiding.

Recruitment

Defense Secretary Reyes said the supposed recruitment drive of Honasan and Lacson had so far been limited to retired military men, those discharged from the service, and those on absence without leave.

"I doubt if they can get people from the active military service," he said.

Military sources said the intelligence community was on the lookout for 500-800 Guardians believed to have come from Mindanao and "infiltrated" Metro Manila starting in the last week of April.

This was at the height of the Estrada loyalist rallies at the Edsa Shrine.

In Cebu City, members of the Criminal Intelligence and Investigation Division (CIID) raided the house of retired Senior Supt. Benjamin Paclibar, a known ally of Lacson, in Skyview Park, Nivel Hills.

Chief Insp. Paul Labra, CIID chief, said the raiders searched for firearms that Paclibar allegedly kept in the house, but found none.

Senior Supt. Alejandro Lapinid, director of the Cebu City Police Office, said the raid was also conducted in connection with the nationwide hunt for Lacson.

"We cannot deny the fact that Paclibar is one of the trusted men of Lacson," Lapinid said.

He said the raid was based on the order of Chief Avelino Razon, police director for Central Visayas, to verify reports that Paclibar might be hiding Lacson.

Lapinid also cited reports that Lacson's group would use the alleged cache of firearms against the government.

Paclibar, however, maintained that he did not have firearms in his house and that he did not know Lacson's whereabouts.

He said the raid was politically motivated because he was supporting the campaign for mayor of former Cebu City Mayor Tomas Osmeña.

'Huge vacuum'

In a statement, Honasan called on the Supreme Court to act with dispatch on his petition questioning the legality and constitutionality of Ms Macapagal's declaration of a state of rebellion in Metro Manila.

"Although it has been lifted, the recent declaration of a state of rebellion left many legal and constitutional questions that have not been satisfactorily answered," Honasan said.

He said this had left a "huge vacuum that may pave the way for a constitutional crisis."

"Unless the Supreme Court rules on the petition's legality and constitutionality, there is no stopping the President and even future presidents from the misuse, if not altogether abuse, of the executive power to declare a state of emergency on the questionable state of rebellion," he added.

Members of the Rebolusyonaryong Alyansang Makabansa (RAM), the rightwing group that Honasan led in mounting coup attempts against the Aquino administration, called on him "to give himself up and subject himself to the legal processes."

"We have seen that these legal processes are moving and we believe he will get due process," Comm. Domingo Calajate, chair of the RAM's executive committee, said in a press conference in Makati City.

Calajate described Honasan as "momentarily *naliligaw ang landas* (astray)," and said: "We need some time to talk to him."

Calajate also downplayed Honasan's capability to launch a large military attack on the government, as he did in 1989.

"If he does have the capability, maybe it would only be small in scale—bombings and the like," Calajate said.

The RAM Executive Committee said it was supportive of the "actions taken by the government before, during and after" the "tumultuous gatherings" at Edsa and Mendiola on May 1.

It vowed to pursue its political objectives "within the democratic system and legal processes."

"We pledge and reaffirm support to the Constitution and the duly constituted government of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and implore the people to keep faith with her administration," it said.

Transfer

The DOJ is now considering legal means to allow the transfer of more than 100 people jailed for rioting near Malacañang on May 1 to the custody of the Department of Social Welfare and Development.

Chief State Prosecutor Jovencito Zuño said the transfer was Malacañang's "latest instruction" to the DOJ after the President indicated that she wanted the rioters released.

Zuño refused to elaborate on the technicalities that such a transfer could involve. But he noted that several minors were among those jailed.

More than half the number of the rioters are detained at the Western Police District. The rest are in Camp Crame.

Ms Macapagal blames the rioters' leaders for their arrest, according to her spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao. ***With reports from Carlito Pablo, Rocky Nazareno, Cathy C. Yamsuan, Alcuin Papa and Margarette Teodosio; Jhunnex Napallacan, PDI Visayas Bureau***

Money, drugs booze, tools for SEA violence

(From page A1)

Nongovernment organizations, such as the East Timor Action Network and Amnesty International, have also documented reports that the militia were trained and paid by the military.

Rent-a-mob

In Indonesia, the rent-a-mob phenomenon has become an integral part of the political scene, according to Mochtar Buchori, a Jakarta-based political commentator.

"It is very common in Indonesia to use money to lure protestors. It is primarily done by people with big war chests who want to take advantage of the tension and chaos in the country to influence public opinion," he said.

Robert Broadfoot of the Political and Economic and Risk Consultancy in Hong Kong agreed that members of the elite seeking to present their own personal agenda as grass-roots "people power" movements were the real force behind many politically related demonstrations in the region.

"What we saw in East Timor and the Philippines was not 'people power.' It happens all over the world," he said.

"It is very rare when you have leaders who have disagreements and start slugging it out on the street themselves—they get their supporters to do it."

Mobilized

Unlike the mainly middle-class protesters who swamped Manila's streets in January to oust Estrada, the majority of the 8,000 rioters who tried to storm Malacañang earlier this month were from impoverished backgrounds, said Broadfoot.

"Who pays their bus fare? Certainly people are getting money. If they are poor people, they are not going to pay to travel," he said.

"They were mobilized in the Philippines. The Philippines is a country where personalities rather than issues dominate and so it is not too difficult for a member of the elite or a leader to mobilize his people," he added.

"In Thailand in the 1970s, the opposition would call in people from the countryside to pretend they were students from technical colleges. Rent-a-crowd techniques have been used many times before."

Chang Chak-yan, director of research on ethnicity and overseas Chinese economics at Ling Nan University in Hong Kong, agreed that it was a common phenomenon but he cautioned against concluding that most demonstrators from society's underbelly in Southeast Asia were phony.

He pointed to the opposition Keadilan party protests in Malaysia as an example of people motivated by cause rather than incentives.

Idle people

Nevertheless, he said, unemployment mixed with poverty were the key ingredients to the rent-a-mob phenomenon, particularly in Indonesia.

"There are so many people idle in Jakarta's slum areas without regular employment that any time the political situation is unsettled, they join demonstrations because they are paid money," he said.

"They do not have a political agenda Their purpose is different. Their aim is to attack people, loot shops and cause problems," Chang said.

His comments echoed Mochtar's assertion that "if you are hungry and promised 50,000 rupiah ($6), you will do anything. You don't feel any individual guilt because you are all together It is collective guilt."

Drugs and alcohol in particular were very effective in stirring up violent rampages, according to analysts.

President Macapagal said that of the more than 100 pro-Estrada rioters arrested, a third had tested positive for drugs.

And journalists, human rights workers and international observers in East Timor in 1999 reported many crazed looking militia.

Three months before the UN-organized poll, East Timor's Nobel Peace Prize awardee Bishop Carlos Belo said he had heard many descriptions of "people with their eyes all red" who are "not conscious about what they are doing."

Energy drink

And Australian investigative reporter Jill Jolliffe told AFP that survivors of the Sept. 8, 1999 massacre in Maliana police station, in which about 70 people were killed, had told her their attackers appeared to be in a drug-induced frenzy.

Other observers reported widespread consumption by the militia of kratindaeng, an energy drink which, when mixed with alcohol, has an intoxicating effect.

Chang also highlighted the attacks in Indonesia against ethnic Chinese shortly before former President Suharto's fall in May 1998.

"Many Chinese spoke of their attackers appearing to be on drugs in what they say was an anti-Chinese campaign organized by shadow leaders," he said

The problem has also been observed further afield. In the troubled Pacific islands of Fiji, people are accustomed to being given kava, an alcoholic drink, if they turn up at demonstrations, while in Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands the mind-bending beetle nut is often used as bait.

"One thing is sure, if you are a normal person you are not going to beat or rape another person. But if you are high on alcohol or drugs, you are able to do anything. That is why all these people were given drugs," Mochtar said. *AFP*

Gov't frees 89 Erap supporters

(From page A1)

The price of freedom was cheap for both Enrile and Maceda, but too steep for the poor detainees.

Following a Supreme Court order allowing him to post bail, Enrile readily put up P100,000 for his temporary liberty. He was accused of rebellion, punishable with life imprisonment and normally a non-bailable offense.

Maceda shelled out P80,000 for bail. He was charged with conspiracy to commit rebellion.

The 54 detainees at the WPD headquarters, on the other hand, were hard put in raising money for a P200,000 bail set by the Manila Regional Trial Court.

They were not only charged with rebellion but also murder, attempted murder, assault on persons of authority and malicious mischief resulting in destruction of property and injury to others.

A,much lower bail was set for the 35 detainees at the PNP headquarters in Camp Crame. Even so, none of them could afford the P80,000 bail imposed by the Quezon City Regional Trial Court.

The detainees thanked Ms Macapagal for granting them provisional freedom.

"We assure her that we won't make trouble again," one of the detainees at the WPD headquarters said.

The detainees are expected to be released into the custody of the DSWD where they will be required to undergo weekly seminars, workshops and training.

They will also have to present themselves once a week to their respective barangay captains.

Lapid, who was appointed by Ms Macapagal as her "special emissary to urban poor communities," has promised to present the suspects in court hearings.

But Chief Supt. Nestorio Gualberto, head of the PNP Criminal Investigation and Detection Group, said he would only release the 35 detainees at Camp Crame upon orders of the Quezon City Regional Trial Court.

Soliman said "friends of the President" would raise money to bail out the detainees should the need arise.

Hypocrisy

A spokesperson for the opposition coalition Puwersa ng Masa, however, said Ms Macapagal's order showed the "doublespeak and hypocrisy" of her administration.

Jesus Cripin Remulla said the move was "a cosmetic attempt to shield (Ms Macapagal) and her senatorial ticket" in the May 14 local and congressional elections.

Sen. Renato Cayetano, however, said it was only fair that the ax should fall on the instigators and financiers of the riot that left four dead and about 100 injured.

Cayetano said he would ask the President and Congress to grant amnesty to all the poor Estrada supporters in jail.

He said the President had the power "to grant amnesty to a class of persons who are accused of political offenses, before or after the institution of the criminal proceedings."

"Amnesty will give them a clean slate and a second chance to live a peaceful and productive life," Cayetano said.

He cited a similar situation during the administration of former President Fidel Ramos who issued Proclamation No. 723 which granted amnesty to rebels who had committed crimes against public order in furtherance of political ends.

But Cayetano stressed that the proposed amnesty should be "limited to the poor ralliers who were duped, blinded, victims of instigations and machinations."

"Suspected promoters, financiers and leaders of the rebellion should not be covered by the amnesty," he said. ***With reports from Rocky Nazareno, Cathy Cañares-Yamsuan and Carina Roncesvalles***

'Mama, papa, why are you in jail?'

(From page A1)

Norberto and Rosalina hope they could be released before May 28, in time for Gilbert's graduation from summer kindergarten class. *(Story on Page A1.)*

Devout INC

Devout Iglesia ni Cristo members, the couple had trekked almost every night to the Edsa Shrine in Mandaluyong City to join the swelling ranks of supporters of deposed President Estrada.

Though the couple stand firm in their belief that President Macapagal is only "acting President," they denied they are pro-Estrada. They were not sorry for taking part in what government authorities alleged had been an attempt by the leaders and organizers of the five-day "Edsa Tres" to overthrow the Macapagal administration.

"I told the children that we are here because we fought for God and our Constitution," Rosalina told the INQUIRER.

"That's what our church agreed on and that's what the Bible says," added Norberto, 30, who works as an aluminum fabricator in a factory in Bagong Barrio, Caloocan City. His wife is a plain housewife. They live in Area D, Camarin, Caloocan.

"We are not pro-Erap, but pro-God and pro-Constitution," the Donatos claim.

Rosalina was certain that when their children grow older, "they would understand—and be proud—of what we had done."

They said they are aware of the political events in the country being avid AM radio listeners and newspaper readers.

They went to Edsa with other INC members. It was their fellow INC members who accompanied the children to the WPD detention center yesterday.

The Donatos denied they were paid to go to Edsa and Mendiola. They never participated in the rioting that followed the dispersal of the rally, they claimed.

They recounted that when the gunfire and stone throwing started, they scurried for cover and sought refuge along the wall of La Consolacion College.

"We were frightened of the rocks and the bullets; we stayed there while the dispersal took place," Rosalina said. At first policemen did not pay attention to them. After a few minutes, a group of policemen approached and placed them under arrest.

"We were lucky because we weren't beaten up like the others," she added.

The couple said they "feel at home" at the pelota court because they are among their own, the poorest of the poor.

Torre sweeps 'simul'

GRANDMASTER Eugene Torre swept his matches Monday, during the launching of the third series of Milo Checkmate clinic at the third floor of Farmers Plaza, Araneta Center, Quezon City. Torre consumed a total of four hours to finish off his 28 protagonists, whose ages ranged from 4-19 years.

SPORTS

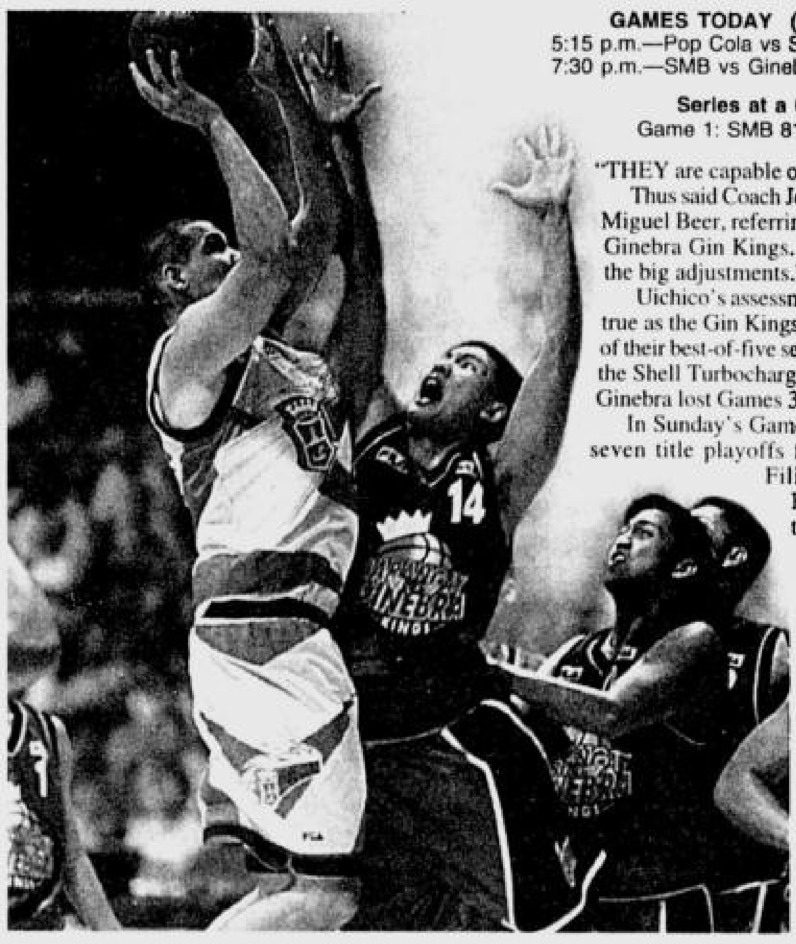
AL S. MENDOZA, Editor ■ EDWIN M. VILLANUEVA, Assistant Editor

Abadia reaches quarters

TOP-RANKED Adelo Abadia recovered from a first-set loss to reach the men's singles quarterfinals of the P100,000 Mandaue City Men's Open Tennis Championships at the Mantads courts. Abadia, winner of the Bacolod Open last Sunday, beat Michael Quinonez, 3-6, 6-2, 6-2, to advance against unranked Antonio Sagansay, a 6-0, 6-4 winner over Redentor Econg.

PBA ALL-FILIPINO FINALS

SMB seeks 2-0 lead vs Ginebra


SEIGLE defies Banjo Calpito's defense as Ronald Magtulis and Jun Limpot look on. San Miguel won, 81-75. ROMY HOMILLADA

GAMES TODAY (Philsports)
5:15 p.m.—Pop Cola vs Shell (KO for 3rd)
7:30 p.m.—SMB vs Ginebra (Game 2)

Series at a Glance:
Game 1: SMB 81, Ginebra 75

"THEY are capable of coming back."

Thus said Coach Jong Uichico of San Miguel Beer, referring to the Barangay Ginebra Gin Kings. "They can make the big adjustments."

Uichico's assessment may yet prove true as the Gin Kings rallied in Game 5 of their best-of-five semifinal series with the Shell Turbochargers to prevail, 3-2. Ginebra lost Games 3 and 4.

In Sunday's Game 1 of the best-of-seven title playoffs for the PBA All-Filipino crown, the Beermen defeated the Kings with ease, 81-75.

Game 2 is set at 7:30 p.m. today at Philsports after the 5:15 p.m. battle for third between Pop Cola and Shell.

The Panthers are eyeing their 8th third-place finish and the Turbochargers their 5th.

"It can't be gauged on how we'll fare in the series," said Uichico. "Even a 2-0 lead won't be enough gauge. Maybe a 3-0 lead would be enough."

He said even the Beermen's 17-point margin in Game 1 appeared puny, emphasizing that the Gins chopped that down to just five at game's end.

When Ginebra closed in at 58-53, San Miguel was bailed out of trouble by Danny Seigle and Danny Ildefonso as the duo fired eight points each for the Beermen breakaway.

"Ginebra seemed tired from its long series against Purefoods and Shell," said Uichico. "With the rest of two days given us, I think Ginebra will be a changed team in Game 2."

Caidic locked himself up at the dugout after Game 1 together with consultant Ron Jacobs.

But Jacobs, who acted as TV analyst in Game 1, said the Gins failed to match up against the Beermen's big lineup.

Caidic using his three guards—Mark Caguioa, Jayjay Helterbrand and Bal David—simultaneously backfired against the Beermen's solid defense.

Caguioa was 4-of-12 from the floor and 1-of-3 from the arc for nine points compared to his 16.6 point average in the semis on 58.3 percent shooting from the three-point region and 48.4 percent shooting from the field.

It was SMB's Olsen Racela who did the most damage for Ginebra, firing 20 points as he hit his first five three-pointers to overshadow all the Ginebra guards.

UM shares 2nd in Padilla Cup

Games Tomorrow (Rizal Memorial Coliseum)
11:30 a.m.—LPC vs SSC
1:00 p.m.—UST vs PSBA
2:30 p.m.—NEU vs Lyceum
4:00 p.m.—UE vs UM
5:30 p.m.—PSBA vs Mapua

UNIVERSITY of Manila showed devastating form in a 93-65 dumping of University of the East yesterday, climbing to a share of second place in the 1st Sen. Ambrosio Padilla Memorial Cup at the Rizal Memorial Coliseum.

Drawing 41 points from Rudolf Eilenger, the Hawks ripped the game apart, 53-25, at halftime en route to their second straight win in the tournament honoring the first president of the Basketball Association of the Philippines.

The Hawks caught up with the San Sebastian Stags, who also bared their strength in a 75-56 crushing of the UST Growling Tigers, at 2-0.

Que targets repeat win

ANGELO Que seeks a place in history as the sixth repeat winner against a strong opposition that will include four ex-champions when the 2001 Philippine amateur golf championship is held May 15-20 at the Alabang Country Club.

Que's bid will be challenged by former national team standouts, club champions, provincial bets and junior golfers toughened by the ongoing summer circuits.

There will be no less than 100 names in the roster after registration closes this week, according to the organizing National Golf Association of the Philippines.

Already confirmed are 1999 champion Artemio Murakami and three winners during the 1970s, Rolly Viray (1975), Emilio Tuazon (1976) and Francis Gaston (1978).

Three brothers of Frankie Miñoza who just broke his losing skid in the Japanese Tour head the regional bets with Canlubang's Juvic Pagunsan looming as the strongest threat to Que's back-to-back bid.

"It's definitely one of the strongest fields we've seen in years and we can expect a lot of surprises," said NGAP president Rod Feliciano.

Spurs beat Mavs in Western semis

SAN ANTONIO—Derek Anderson was not in the Alamodome on Monday night. His presence surely was felt.

Facing the Dallas Mavericks two nights after Juwan Howard's flagrant foul left Anderson with a separated shoulder, the Spurs won an emotion-filled game 100-86 to take a 2-0 lead in the Western Conference semifinals.

Tim Duncan, who came out wearing a white armband reading "DA, 1" led the Spurs with 25 points and 22 rebounds.

The best-of-seven series shifts to Dallas for Game 3 on Wednesday night.

The Spurs, who wanted Howard to be suspended for the midair collision that sent Anderson crashing to the floor, took the lead for good shortly after coach Gregg Popovich was ejected late in the first half. Popovich flew onto the court screaming that a flagrant foul called on Danny Ferry—for a hard foul on Howard—was unfair. *AP*

Ana chills Montaña, claims Group A slot

By Dennis U. Eroa

DAGUPAN-pride Dondon Mendoza scored the crucial points, lifting Ana Freezer to a pulsating 73-66 triumph over Montaña Pawnshop yesterday in the PBL Chairman's Cup at the Makati Coliseum.

The 6-foot-4 Mendoza bailed the Freezer Kings out of trouble as he clustered five points, which padded a slim 64-62 lead to a 69-62 advantage, one minute remaining.

Thus, Ana formally joined Shark Energy Drink (8-0) to the Group A quarterfinals with a second-best 6-1 record. It was also the fifth straight win by team owner Rudy Mendoza since he took over as head coach.

"Prayers did it for us," said Mendoza, who postponed a business trip to the US in order to coach the Freezer Kings.

Rey Mendez, Roland Pascual and Ariel Capus ably supported Mendoza. Playmaker Robin Mendoza also excelled with 11 assists.

With power forward Francis Zamora lording the boards, the Jewels battled the Freezer Kings on even terms throughout. Montaña, however, collapsed when Ana tightened its defense.

The 6-foot-5 Zamora finished with 12 points and 12 rebounds but hardly got support from his teammates.

In the second game, Hapee stunned Ateneo-Pioneer, 72-56.

Meanwhile, in the Crystal Spring PYBL basketball championship, Regent Cheeseballs repulsed National University, 79-76, for its second win in four games.

SCORES:

ANA 73—Mendoza D. 19, Mendez 14, Pascual 11, Mendoza 10, Capus 8, Tubid 6, Artadi 5, Vilar 0, Flores 0, De Castro 0.

MONTAÑA 66—Gottenbos 13, Zamora 12, Lim 10, David 9, Mesina 7, Misola 6, Medina 5, Lao 2, Torrente 2, Estrada 0, Latoreno 0.

Quarters: 22-20, 36-33, 53-45, 73-66

Lopez sending boxers to Europe

By Roy Luarca

INSPIRED by its successful stint in Cuba, the Amateur Basketball Association of the Philippines will next compete in the 2001 World Amateur Boxing Championships and the Acropolis International next month.

Manny Lopez, Abap president, bared this yesterday as he announced the composition of the national teams seeing action in the prestigious tournaments.

Going to Belfast, Ireland, for the June 2-10 world championships are Roberto Balado Cup flyweight gold medalist Violeto Payla, light fly Harry Tanamor, bantam Arlan Lerio, feather Esmael Bacongon and lightweight Igusquiza. Lopez will head the delegation with Patricio Gaspi as coach and Arturo Vidal as referee/judge.

Named to the Acropolis tournament set June 13-20 in Athens, Greece, are light fly Lhyven Salazar, flyweight Rene Villaluz, bantam Ferdie Gamo, feather Florencio Ferrer, welter David Gopong, middleweight Maximino Tabangcora and light heavyweightr Maraon Golez. Delegation head is Ruben Roque with Vicente Arcenal and Elmer Pamisa as coaches and Ernesto Peque as referee/judge.

Lopez said the teams' composition was arrived at after a thorough evaluation and deliberation by the national coaching staff led by George Caliwan.

The national boxers won one gold medal, two silvers and six bronzes in Cuba last month.

"These boxers have been religiously training and are the front-runners in the race for slots in the national team that will see action in the Southeast Asian Games this yehr," said Lopez.

The Filipino boxers' international stints are being shouldered by Caltex Phils., the Philippine Sports Commission and Pacific Heights.

Int'l 9-cock derby May 29

THE THIRD edition of the "Mandaluyong International 9-Cock Derby" sizzles on May 29, 31 and June 2 at the Mandaluyong Coliseum with more than 75 local and international cockfighting stars. Derby hosts are Ucap stalwarts Vic Yu and engineer Sonny Lagon while sponsor is Sagupaan Super Feeds.

Sportsman-businessman Danding Cojuangco's Bumble Bee Balbina topped the first edition held in December 1999 as his entry posted a perfect 9-0 record but the foreigners returned with a vengeance in the second edition last January as veteran cocker-breeder Chuck Berry of Oklahoma, USA, in partnership with lawyer Ram Lopez (Ariba Albay, 7.5 points) ruled the event.

Meanwhile, small and medium-scale gamefowl enthusiasts are invited to test their battlebirds against the up and coming cocker-breeders from Negros Occidental and other parts of the country, in connection with the "P5 million Araw ng Kalayaan 7-Cock Derby" on June 3, 14, 16, 19, 21 23 and 26.

WHAT CAN I SAY

Bebo Quiros

Triple Crown fever

THE CHASE for Triple Crowns all over the Northern Hemisphere has begun. In Louisville, Ky, in the US of A, the Kentucky Derby, that fabulous Run for the Roses, was held last Saturday at Churchill Downs, witnessed by a crowd of 154,210, the second largest since Cannonade's Derby in 1974. In an overpowering performance, Florida Derby winner, Monarchos, coasted to a 4 1/2 length victory over longshot Invisible Ink and Congaree. Monarchos is a Maria's Mon (Wavering Monarch) colt out of the Dixieland Band mare, Regal Band. He is owned by Oklahoma oil magnate John Oxley who also owns 25% of the Peachtree Racing Partnership that owns Invisible Ink. It was the first Derby winner saddled by John T. Ward. John Velasquez rode the winner. Pre-race favourite Point Given finished up the track, fifth. Time for the race was 1:59.97, second fastest since Secretariat's 1:59 2/5 in 1973.

Over in Newmarket, England, the Sagitta 2000 Guineas, held also last Saturday, was won by the Spectrum (Rainbow Quest) colt, Golan. Time for the race over the Rowley Mile Course was 1:37.480. It was the second consecutive win for Golan's trainer, Sir Michael Stoute. Stoute won the 2000 edition with King's Best, as well as with Shadeed (1985), Doyoun (1988) and Entrepreneur (1997). It was also two in a row for jockey Kieren Fallon on the comeback trail from serious injury. Fallon rode King's Best last year. The Spectrum colt now goes to the head of the market for the Vodafone English Derby which will be held in close proximity to the Belmont Stakes in June. Golan won without the benefit of a tune-up race, inspite of a bad starting post position (19) and jumping off near the tail-end. Golan is a homebred owned by Lord Weinstock and his Ballymcoll Stud Farm in Ireland. Golan's dam, Highland Gift is also a hombred by Generous.

Fallon had this to say about Golan: "It is something to come from that far back to win a Guineas. They can do it in handicaps but not in Classics - it doesn't happen. I knew I was always going to get there, it being his first run, and when he got to the Dip, I thought he was going to blow up but he didn't. He got his second wind and went again." Together with last year's top Irish 2-yr-old, Hemmingway, Spectrum has a strong pair for this year's English Derby. Placegetters Tamburlaine (Royal Academy) and Frenchman's Bay (Polar Falcon) are also Derby bound.

Our version of a Triple Crown series begins on 20 May 2001. The Philracom once again brings to focus the hardwork of the local breeding industry with the latest edition of the Cojuangco Cup, named after the first chairman of the Philracom, Eduardo M. Cojuangco, Jr.

COJUANGCO CUP ENTRIES

Name of Horse	Age	Sex/Color	Weight(kgs)	Jockey	Owner/Trainer/Breeder
1. Batangas Entry	3	M/DB	55	PR Dilema	Paolo D. Mendoza/ Rodolfo G. Mendoza/ A.Benedicto L. Santos
(Pedigree: Piker—Because Milady/Earnings to 30/Apr/01: P267,840.94)					
2. Bishop Kind	3	M/B	55	JB Bacaycay	Jimmy L. Ching/ Clarito C. Alvarez/T.A.S.K, Inc.
(Heart of Arabia—Rachel's Dream / P505,720.98)					
3. Flaming Bullet	3	M/B	55	JE C Guce	Joseph C. Dyhengco/ Ruben S. Tupas/ Leonardo M. Javier, Jr.
(Lloubovnik—To The Manor Born / P327,840.94)					
4. Gutmoore	3	F/CH	53	VR Dilema	Jose Mari A. Franco/ Juan C. Sordan/ Leonardo M. Javier, Jr.
(Gut Feel—Hannah Moore / P1,277,301.87)					
5. Hammerhead	3	F/CH	53	JM Manalo	Ramoncito C. Arceo/ Ramon M. Domingo/ Manuel Viray
(Heza Gone West - Vice Shy / P1,053,679.77)					
6. Ilocandia Slew	3	F/DB	53	FM Raquel, Jr.	Reynaldo M. Bunag/ Nestor E. Manalang/ Jason S. Lim
(Almaam - Seode / P1,145,708.32)					
7. Lord of All	3	M/CH	55	ES de Vera	Mariano V. Tirona/ Martin Carlos R. Macaraig/ Mesaland Dev. Corp.
(Khozaam - Sassy / P419,744.31)					
8. Mr. Purao	3	M/DB	55	AB Alcasid, Jr.	Emilio S. Alviar, Jr./ Emilio O. Basco/ Filomeno O. Abuel
(Piker - Anemometer / P712,130.64)					
9. Silver Rose	3	F/B	53	Jim Ladiana	Francis B. Trillana, Jr./ Alfredo G. Abobo/ Jose Y. Quiros
(Conquistarose - Silver Whip / P221,738.26)					
10. Silver Story	3	M/GR	55	JB Hernandez	Patrick P. Uy/ Ricardo P. Paman, Jr./ Juanito Y. Tionloc
(Conquistarose - Northern Edge / P4,102,907.89)					
11. Sky Hawk	3	F/B	53	JD Camu	A. Benedicto L. Santos/ Jose G. Diaz/ A. Benedicto L. Santos
(Piker - Corralera / P427,833.47)					
12. Speed Goddess	3	F/B	53	VM Camanero, Jr.	Roberto D. Yutadco/ Jose Fernandez/ Leonardo M. Javier, Jr.
(Snowy Owl - Keep Quiet / P1,211,924.10)					
13. Speed Master	3	M/CH	55	RC Sanchez	Roberto D. Yutadco/ Jose S. Fernandez/ Manuel Viray
(El Raggaas - Lost My Eyes / P584,047.27)					
14. Staunch Ally	3	M/B	55	DH Borbe, Jr.	Aristeo G. Puyat/ Juan C. Sordan/ Aristeo G. Puyat
(Gut Feel - Staunch Flame / P173,104.49)					

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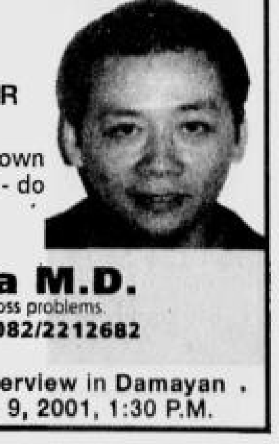

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No.1170 Series of 2001.

Biting the hand that fed them

STANLEY Martinez of Valenzuela City was on board his car Monday afternoon when six men in another car without license plates stopped him in Caloocan City and took his P100,000 cash, Rolex watch and other jewels, his driver's P3,500 and, after dumping him and the driver in Pampanga, his car. Martinez said four of the robbers used to work in his freight service firm. *Christian V. Esguerra, Paul Ernest Lazaro*

METRO

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

Cabbie caught unzipped

TAXI driver Reggie Ulat gave a free ride to four teenage girls he found at the CCP Complex in Pasay City early yesterday and then promised to pay them P50 if they would "play" with his sex organ. One of the girls was doing it, while the cab was parked in Malate, when Manila policemen spotted them and arrested the driver, whom they found with his fly still open. *Myla Torres*

6 youths accused of killing boy, 12

BY PHILIP C. TUBEZA

QUEZON City police will file murder charges against six young men, aged 12 to 19, for the killing of John Rey Banaag, 12, on Saturday night.

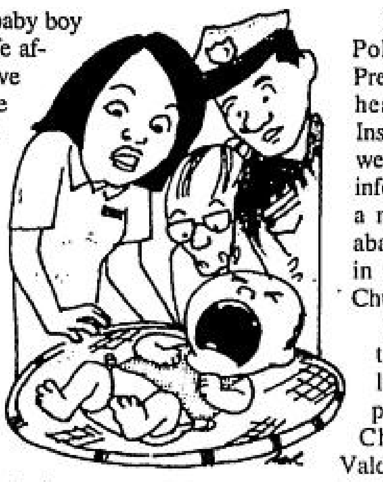
Police arrested vendor Mark Anthony Paano, 19; high school junior Rick, 17; sophomore Joe, 16; freshman Ron, 16; Phil, 14; and Chris, 12, (not their real names) all residents of Novaliches, Quezon City.

Police said they are trying to find out who among the young men stabbed and killed Banaag, a Grade 4 pupil and resident of Goodwill Townhouse in Bagbag, Novaliches.

"Rick and Phil are accusing each other, but they are part of a group of about 30 young men who ganged up on Banaag,"

6 YOUTHS/ A26

Baby boy in 'bilao' found in Parañaque



AN ABANDONED baby boy got a new lease on life after he was found alive in front of a Parañaque drug store at dawn yesterday.

The baby, believed to be only five months old, was in a *bilao*, a food tray made of bamboo, in front of Mercury Drug Store on Quirino Avenue.

An unidentified employee of the Baclaran branch of the drugstore chain on Quirino Avenue found the baby, who was crying, at 1:35 a.m. yesterday, police said.

Members of the Police Community Precinct in Baclaran headed by Chief Insp. Alfredo Valdez went to the scene and informed the Sernelli, a nursing home for abandoned children, in the Redemptorist Church.

The baby's mother apparently left the child on purpose, said Chief Inspector Valdez.

Poverty could have forced her to abandon her child, he added. *Allison Lopez and Lorraine Santos*

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P40M collected from bay polluters

By Jerry Esplanada

THE GOVERNMENT has collected more than P40 million during the past three years from business establishments found dumping their wastewater into Laguna de Bay, the country's biggest lake.

Last year alone, collections under the market-based scheme called Environmental User Fee (EUF) totaled P17 million, according to lawyer Joaquin Mendoza, general manager of the Laguna Lake Development Authority.

"We're guided by the principle 'polluters should pay and clean up their mess,' which has proven to be very effective," Mendoza told the Inquirer.

In December, at least 659 of the more than 4,000 firms in the Laguna Lake basin were covered by the EUF scheme. LLDA engineers monitor up to 90 establishments daily.

The concept "encourages industrial polluters to reduce water pollution while instituting remedial measures and in the process improve the lake's water quality," noted Mendoza.

"We're looking into the possibility of including households and domestic waste in the EUF system," Mendoza also said.

Under the scheme, the LLDA charges erring firms fines depending on the volume and concentration of their wastewater discharges into Laguna de Bay, also Asia's second largest freshwater lake.

EUF charges vary: P5,000 for daily wastewater volumes of 30 cubic meters and below; P10,000 for discharges between 30 and 150 cubic meters; and P15,000 for discharges of more than 150 cubic meters.

The LLDA has ordered the closure of more than 50 polluting industries during the past three years.

The LLDA also credited the EUF scheme with the significant reduction in the lake's biochemical oxygen demand or BOD loading from industrial sources.

"From 12.1 million kilograms BOD in 1993 (based on a World Bank study), a 55-percent reduction was recorded in 1997, 24.08 percent in 1998 and 73.6 percent in 1999," said an LLDA report.

BOD, the standard measure of water quality, refers to the amount of oxygen consumed by bacteria in the process of decomposition of organic matter. The greater the oxygen demand, the more polluted the body of water.

The LLDA reported that in December, the 90,000-hectare lake had maintained its "Class C" criteria —water suitable for fish culture and industrial use.

Mendoza claimed "the lake is alive and vibrant. Its water quality is even improving. We are positive that in the next 10 or 15 years, we'll be able to maintain its Class C level."

"That is one of the requirements of the Living Lakes network so if Laguna de Bay goes beyond Class C, then it is already considered threatened and will no longer be considered a living lake," he added.

Mendoza and Unilever-Philippines officials brought to the attention of the Living Lakes network the LLDA's plans and environmental programs during an environmental conference in Liverpool, England in November 1999. The Dutch-British Unilever hosted the meeting.

Last year, Laguna de Bay and Morocco's Marache lake were named network "candidates" during the 5th Living Lakes conference in Lake Biwa, near Kyoto, Japan.

Unilever Philippines, manufacturer of consumer goods like soaps and shampoos, and food and beverage, sponsored Laguna lake's bid for membership in the network, which includes 17 lakes and other inland bodies of water worldwide.

"Protection of Laguna lake will be elevated to an international status once it is admitted to the network," said Unilever general manager for corporate development Chito Macapagal.

During the Lake Biwa meeting in Japan, Indonesia's Lake Mahakam, Colombia's Laguna Fuquene, Turkey's Uluabat, and Canada's Columbia river wetlands were admitted to the network.

Other Living Lakes partners are the Dead Sea in Israel, Jordan and Palestine; Constance in Germany, Switzerland and Austria; Laguna la Nava in Spain; Nestos in Greece; the Pantanal Wetlands in Brazil; Mar Chiquita in Argentina; Milicz Ponds in Poland; Tengiz and Korgaljinski in Kazakhstan; and the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads in the United Kingdom.

Homeless man's killer gets 15 years

By Christian V. Esguerra and Mark Isaiah David

A CALOOCAN Regional Trial Court yesterday sentenced a tricycle driver to 15 years in prison for killing a man who ordered him to leave a passenger jeepney where he was sleeping.

Judge Bayani Rivera found Alfredo Villareal guilty of killing his neighbor Oscar Moreno in Caloocan City last June 7. The judge also ordered Villareal to pay Moreno's family P85,000 in damages.

Villareal's brother and co-accused Zaldy is still at large.

Villareal was sleeping inside a jeepney when Moreno and his girlfriend approached him and ordered him to leave, court records showed. The vehicle had been the couple's makeshift residence for the last three months.

Fearing that Villareal would come back, Moreno told his girlfriend to hide. Ten minutes later, the Villareal brothers came, armed with knives.

The brothers chased Villareal until he tripped and fell on the pavement. The brothers repeatedly stabbed him in the chest and the abdomen.

When Moreno tried to stand, the Villareal brothers dropped a hollow block on his face, the girlfriend said in her testimony. She said she was standing five steps away during the attack.

Villareal denied he killed Moreno. He said it was his brother Zaldy who stabbed Moreno.

'Bully' slain

AN ALLEGED street bully in Port Area, Manila was stabbed to death while he was asleep in a billiard hall yesterday before dawn.

The victim, a member of the Bahala Na Gang, was identified only as "Landong Kabal." Police said he was known for his survival skills and ability to withstand pain and other forms of physical assault.

Lando, aged 40 to 45 years old, 5-foot-6 to 5-foot-8 and with no fixed address, was attacked by a certain Allan inside the billiard hall of Yolly's Carinderia on Second Street in Port Area around 2 a.m. yesterday.

PO3 Joselito de Ocampo of the Western Police District homicide section said Lando was sleeping on a wooden bench in the billiard hall when Allan stabbed him in the abdomen. The wounded Lando was able to run into a parked jeepney but Allan caught up with him and stabbed him again.

Police are looking for Allan, described to be about 25 years old, 5-foot-1 to 5-foot-3 and a resident of Tamburong Street, Port Area. *Jerome Aning*

Losing seriously is no comedy

Bare Eye

Recah Trinidad

(B-DAY TOAST: A dear friend from early, early boyhood celebrates his birthday today. Sorry, I'm not at liberty to announce the years. I have closely followed the ups and downs of this poor guy, who has hopefully grown a little wiser. He has been my constant companion in all my travels. We've been happy. We have also known hunger and pain. We have cried and laughed together. OK, we have had some silly quarrels, but the good thing is that all the old friends we have known since our very young age, dear Pepot mainly, have remained very true friends, real treasures, to this early autumn of our years. I drink a birthday drink to that.)

* * *

HE won't be party to a fraud. He won't allow anybody to cheat the crowd. Sportsman Rudy Salud, sounding very concerned, vehemently denied that the Japanese boxers whom Gerry Peñalosa dumped in less than half a round on Saturday was a patsy.

No patsy. However, Keiji Yamaguchi became one big comic sight after Peñalosa's fully re-charged left straight landed smack on his jaw. The Japanese, after toppling over with his shoes pointing toward the headlights, looked like a boy who had lost his grip and fallen hard from a tree. He appeared deathly shaken.

Rudy Salud, however, refused to blame the stunned visitor. He said it so happened that Yamaguchi met Peñalosa at his sharpest, strongest best. Neither would he blame matchmaker Joe Koizumi. Salud said Koizumi had definitely thought the Japanese boxer he brought over, being a former world champion, would be equal to the task.

* * *

We can only nod and acknowledge Mr. Salud's statements.

No laughing, please. The visitors took their defeat very seriously.

Actually, I walked down the village *talipapa* yesterday and fight fans whom I met were one in expressing their disappointment.

Of course, they were very glad that Peñalosa had won.

But these people I talked to also wondered if the Japanese had any business being with Peñalosa inside the ring.

Other than these fans, a few other fight experts felt Peñalosa deserved a worthier opponent.

Cebu-based boxing manager Rex Wakee Salud, who has produced a total of three Filipino world champions, said Peñalosa indeed appeared extra sharp. But he added Gerry Boy should've been given a tougher opponent. After all, last Saturday's bout was supposed to form part of Peñalosa's tune-up for his next crack at the WBC super flyweight title which he used to hold.

* * *

It was exactly that, a tough foe, they had ordered for Peñalosa, Mr. Salud explained over the phone yesterday.

He said they had originally asked for Celes Kobayashi, who had drawn with former WBC flyweight champion Malcolm Tunacao in Tokyo last September. But Kobayashi, who subsequently won the WBA 115-pound crown, had refused a showdown with Peñalosa.

"Even Tatshiyoshi, a Japanese boxing idol who's making a comeback, would not dare meet Gerry," Salud said.

Salud hinted that, with his new worth, even other top-caliber fighters in his division are avoiding Peñalosa, who could indeed be the finest super flyweight in the world today.

The ultimate test of how much Peñalosa has benefited from a new regimen, both in diet and training, will, however, be known only when he goes for the WBC super flyweight championship sometime in August.

* * *

Top-rated by the WBC, Peñalosa is eagerly awaiting the result of the May 20 fight between Korea's In Joo-Cho and Japan's Masamori Tokoyama in Seoul. For the record, Peñalosa had already met Cho twice but the Filipino ring sensation had lost both bouts in controversial fashion.

Cho, tall and wiry, is more noted for his sly, evasive style than for his guts and skills. He's the kind of fighter who sort of uses a bike inside the ring to avoid being hit or cornered.

Anyway, told that Cho, in case he wins on May 20, might shift to the motorcycle from the plain bike in his third meeting with Peñalosa, Rudy Salud said there would be no way the Korean could run and hide.

Next time out, Mr. Salud said, Gerry would be there to connect and hit the jackpot. The manager said Gerry was just tense and tight last time out.

It's a totally new and vastly improved Peñalosa they would be meeting, Mr. Salud said. In fact, Gerry's brothers had been complaining that, for the first time, their palms would ache and swell each time Gerry would train with the mitts.

To conclude, Rudy Salud said it was wrong to even hint that there was hanky-panky in Peñalosa's very swift knockout win last Saturday.

The vanquished Japanese, although he looked outmatched, was no pushover, Salud repeated. If the visitor had looked funny out there, it was no fault of his main handler either.

Boxing can never slip into comedy. Setbacks by former world champs, no matter how awful, should always be taken seriously. All ex-champs take each defeat as a tragedy.

Army man denies role in robberies

By Carlito Pablo

THE ARMY sergeant tagged as the ringleader of the "Martilyo Gang" yesterday surfaced to deny his involvement in the recent Metro Manila robberies, which left several people injured from grenade blasts.

Sgt. Ruben de Castro, 41, talked to reporters in Camp Crame to clear his name after police identified him as one of the suspects behind the twin grenade explosions at the Ever Gotesco Grand Central Mall in Caloocan City on April 29. The blasts injured about 40 people.

"I am coming out to clear my name," De Castro said.

He said he was in Camp Aguinaldo at the time of the robbery and that he has been in the Army headquarters since April 25 when military authorities raised a red alert.

He showed reporters a certification attesting to his whereabouts from his superior Maj. Dominador Pagulayan of the Provost Marshall's office.

De Castro said he is retiring in four years and has no reason to be involved in criminal acts.

This is not the first time De Castro has been implicated in a robbery. In 1999, police arrested him and four other people suspected of involvement in a robbery attempt They were arrested inside the Gotesco Caloocan Mall.

But De Castro said he was arrested by mistake. He said he was coming out of a movie house when police nabbed him.

He was charged with robbery in band and double frustrated homicide The charges were later reduced to simple robbery and are currently being tried by Branch 120 of the Caloocan Regional Trial Court.

The Martilyo Gang has also been tagged as the group responsible for the bloody robbery on Sunday at the Farmers Plaza in Cubao, Quezon City.

Ambush suspects file raps vs cops, victim's parents

By Jerome Aning

TWO suspects in the ambush-slaying last month of the son of a Manila prosecutor in Parañaque City yesterday turned the tables on the officers who arrested them and on the parents of the victim, whom they charged with arbitrary detention and malicious prosecution.

In a countercharge they filed on May 3, suspects Rolly Tonion, 34, a barangay *tanod* of Ermita, Manila, and Jhunrey Soriano, 38, said the charges against them were fabricated.

Named respondents in their countercharge were Manila assistant city prosecutor Domingo Orda Jr., his wife Reynalda, and Parañaque Inspectors Edgardo Ariate, Ryan David and Jimmy Laugyo, Senior Insp. Dario Menor and a PO3 Roque Torne or Pedreza.

Police said Tonion and Soriano, along with two other unidentified persons who remain at large, are the killers of Orda's son Francis, 21.

The young Orda was ambushed by at least five men early in the evening of April 2 while he was on board a Mitsibushi Lancer at the Better Living Subdivision in Parañaque. The prosecutor believes he was the real target of the ambush.

Five days later, policemen led by Menor rounded up a group of men at the Liwasang Bonifacio in Ermita, Manila. Police picked up Tonion and Soriano along with three others who were later released after witnesses failed to positively identify them.

Tonion and Soriano said they were detained after several witnesses, whom they say they have yet to confront, tagged them as the killers.

Tonion was detained in connection with the killing of Francis while Soriano was pinpointed by Mrs. Orda as one of those involved in the shooting of another Orda son in January.

Tonion said he knew the Ordas because he was once their carpenter. He said the couple fabricated the charge against him because he is close to Ligaya Santos, chair of Barangay 659-A in Manila, who has a feud with the Ordas.

Woman kills shabu-using partner

AN electrician who reportedly got hooked on shabu was stabbed to death by his live-in partner during a quarrel in Sta. Ana, Manila on Monday night.

Police said Marcelo Manzano, 37, a resident of Punta, Sta. Ana, was stabbed by Grace Salvador, 28, his live-in partner of 11 years.

Neighbors told SPO1 Edmundo Cabal of the Western Police District homicide section that Manzano and Salvador, who have four children, began having frequent quarrels after the man recently became addicted to shabu.

At the height of another quarrel in front of their *sari-sari* store around 8 p.m. on Monday, Salvador grabbed a bread knife and stabbed her husband in the right chest, witnesses told police.

A neighbor brought Manzano to the Lourdes Hospital, but he was declared dead on arrival. The victim's body was transferred to the St. Peter funeral parlor.

Members of WPD Station 6 in Sta Ana arrested Salvador and recovered the killing weapon. They said Salvador will be charged with murder. *Jerome Aning*

6 youths ...

(From page A25)

said PO2 Joseph Dino.

The investigator said the suspects are allegedly members of a street gang and one of them stabbed Banaag thrice.

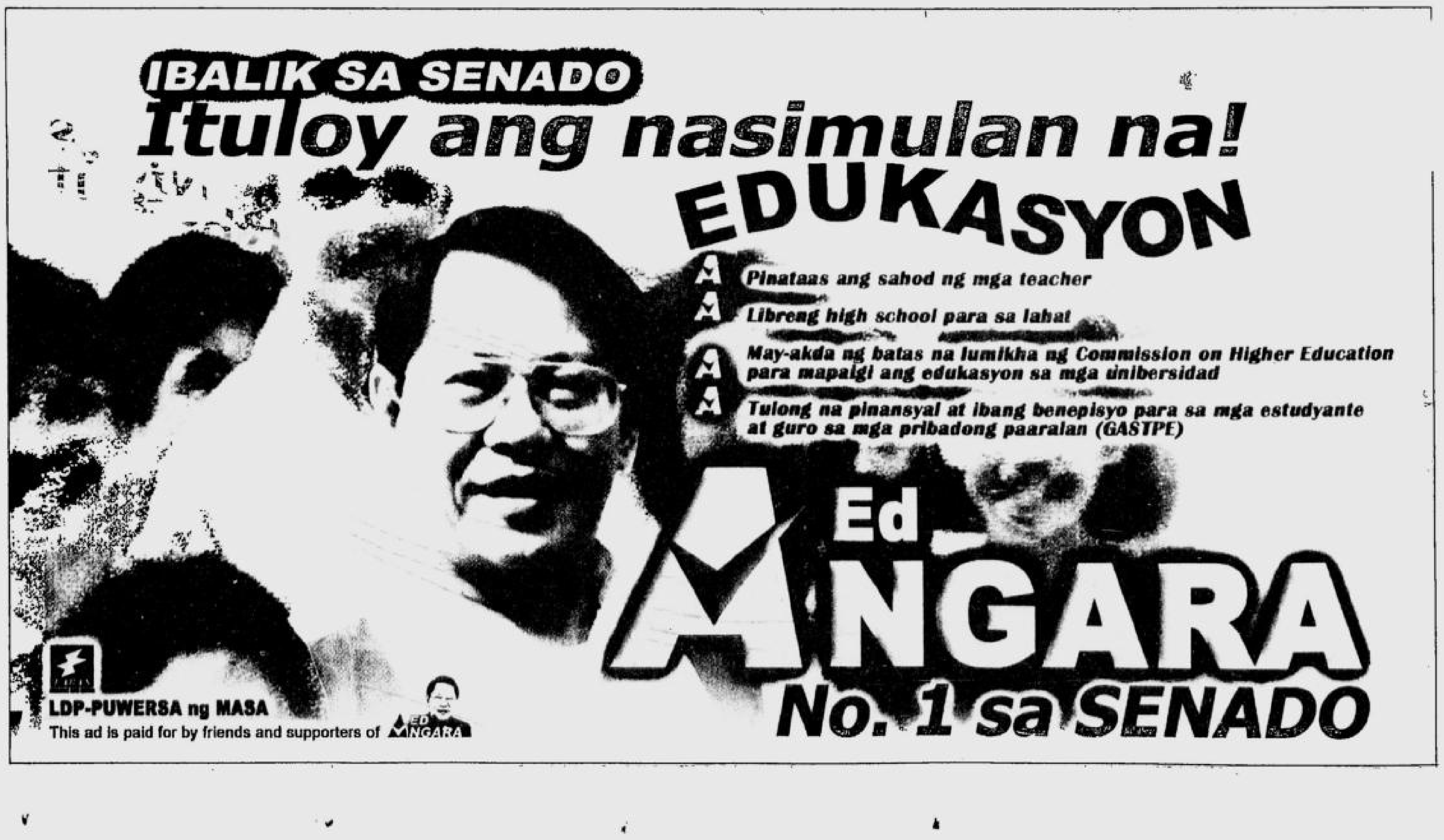
"We are still trying to find out why they beat up Banaag," Dino said. "It may have something to do with rumor mongering and a 13-year-old girl."

He said police now have two witnesses in their custody.

He said Banaag was riding a bicycle with his friend Andrew Soliven on Saturday night when around 30 young men surrounded them in front of the Goodwill Elementary School.

Dino said Soliven was able to run away, but the group caught up with Banaag and began beating him before they stabbed him. Soliven told police he threw rocks at the attackers to drive them away from his beleaguered friend.

When the suspects dispersed, Soliven asked for help from his other friends to get Banaag to the hospital. They took Banaag to the Bernardino Hospital where he was declared dead at 9:20 p.m., Dino said.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Nora's chances of becoming governor dim

NO LOVE LOST—Aunor entertains questions from reporters as a picture of her erstwhile lover, deposed President Estrada, is hoisted beside her in this file photo taken shortly after she joined People Power II in January.

By Juan Escandor Jr.,
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

NAGA CITY—Actress Nora Aunor's chances of winning the gubernatorial post in Camarines Sur appears to be getting slimmer as election day comes nearer.

Aunor, who is running against reelectionist Luis Villafuerte, earlier said that her rival had a formidable political machinery. She said all she had was her honest intention to serve the people.

The militant party-list group Bayan Muna, which has a wide network of supporters in the provinces, had pledged their support for Aunor. But the group backed out last week after differences in ideology and organizational style surfaced. Other cause-oriented groups also dropped out from Aunor's campaign.

During an interview with INQUIRER on the third week of April, Aunor admitted that she could not match the resources of Villafuerte, who is gunning for his last term as governor.

As Villafuerte wooed voters, Aunor appeared to be still trying to figure out where she would get funds for her campaign and was still planning her campaign strategy with Bayan Muna, who was then supporting her.

Scandal

Scandal surrounded Aunor's candidacy.

One allegedly involved the actress' former lover, John Rendez, who came to Iriga City to check on her. Rendez was reportedly piqued with the way Aunor was handled by a certain Nory who acted as her chief of staff.

A shooting incident in Aunor's rented apartment was reported to police and eventually found its way to the local media. No one was reported hurt in the shooting, but no one from Aunor's camp could also explained why the shooting happened.

Poe Gratela, secretary general of Migrante International, allegedly walked out from Aunor's campaign. But the actress was said have fired Nory later and then sought Gratela and told him that she wanted him and the other militant groups in Camarines Sur to handle her campaign.

In turn, Gratela asked the help of Bayan Muna, which agreed to support Aunor as long as they would be the one to direct her campaign.

Conflict

But Aunor's relationship with Bayan Muna did not work out as conflicts between her and the militant group began to brew.

Gratela said there was so much to do to reorient Aunor to the dynamics of political life.

He said Aunor still has to learn how to handle her commitments and appointments and shake away her superstar status.

There were times, Gratela said, when Aunor would agree to a meeting with local personalities but would not show up and would ask him instead to face them.

When Aunor was still with Bayan Muna, her program of government was patterned after the program of most sectoral groups.

Aunor described her program of government consultative in character, which will obviously meet some problems with the Local Government Code.

But Aunor said she was planning to put up a legislative assembly with representations from the basic sectors in the province.

Asked what could be the implication of her plan on the regular composition of the provincial board, her former lawyer Jay Miguel said a legal group was already studying how it could be possibly implemented.

Aunor was also talking about the classic principle espoused by cause-oriented groups of a "government of the masses and from the masses."

PPC candidate

When President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo came to Camarines Sur, she declared Aunor as the official candidate of the People Power Coalition.

But the proclamation did not boost Aunor's candidacy and did not bolster her public presence.

Aunor remained inaccessible to the voters.

She is staying in a hotel in Iriga City and occupies at least three rooms, which cost her at least P50,000 for 15 days.

Several people also ask her for financial assistance on a daily basis. Instead of facing these people, Aunor reportedly asks her staff to explain to these people that she was not yet in power so she could not grant their requests.

This alone has apparently dealt a hard blow to her candidacy.

A woman who asked Aunor for help could only shake her head in disappointment. But she said that Aunor's camp would at least give her the fare to return to her barangay.

In a political exercise where money and favor could influence votes, Aunor's failure to deliver could mean only defeat.

EYEING her political future, does Aunor see herself as Camarines Sur governor?

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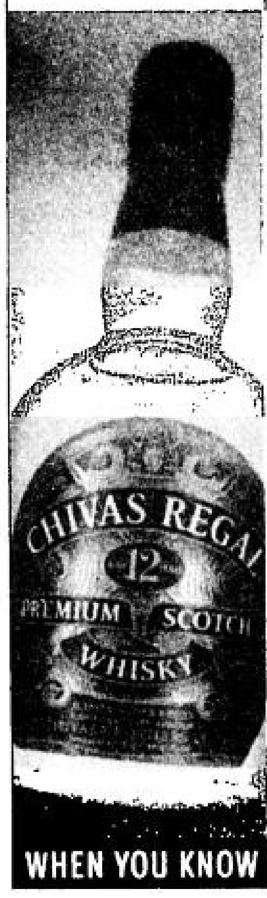

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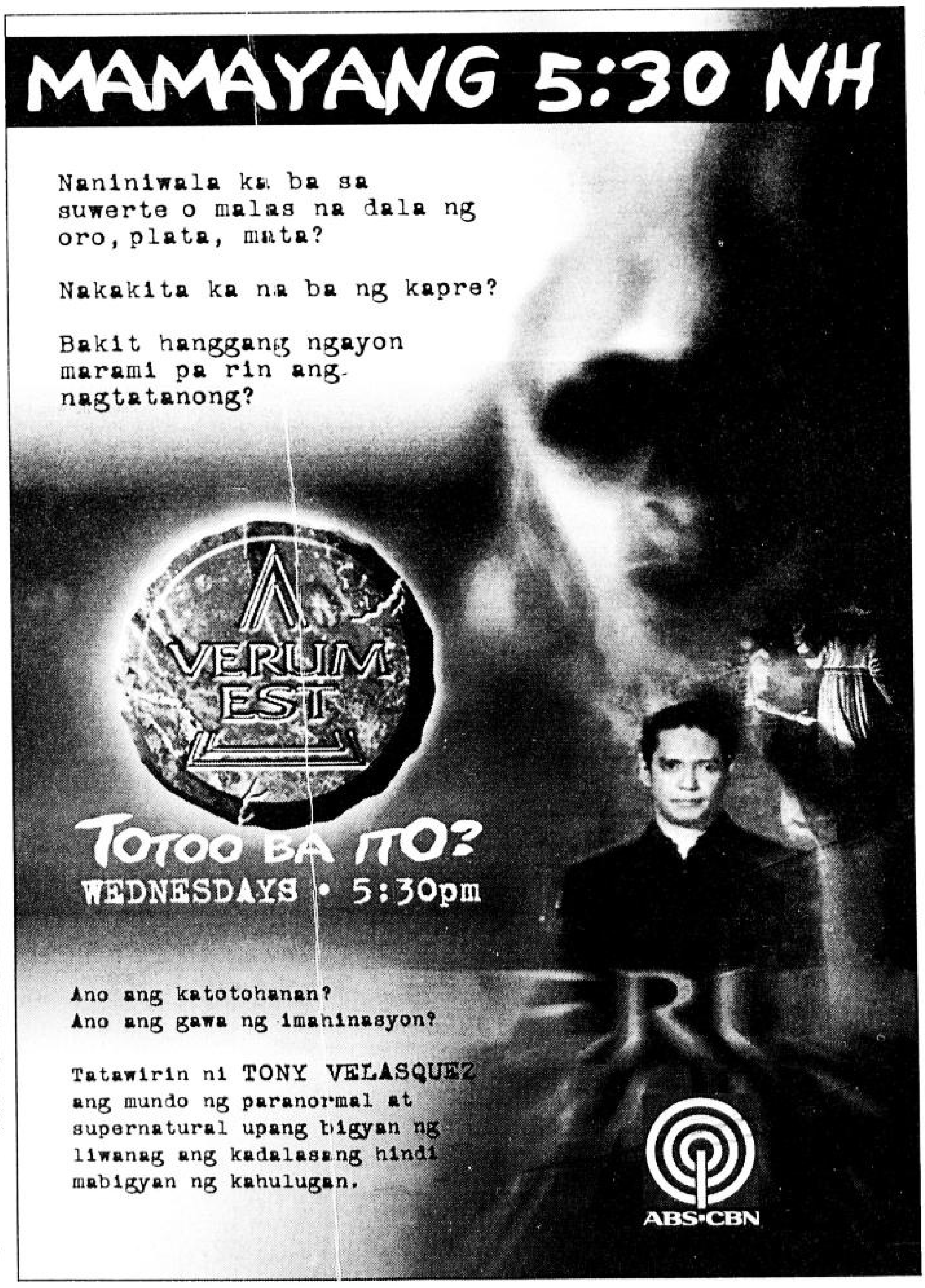

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6	DOLBY SURROUND	15 MINUTES
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8	DOLBY DIGITAL	EXIT WOUNDS
9	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	SAY IT ISN'T SO
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3	ULTRA SURROUND	RECESS
4	ULTRA SURROUND	THEY NEST
5	ULTRA SURROUND	ANTI-TRUST
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1	EXIT WOUNDS
2	BALIKTARAN
3	NARINIG MO NA BA ANG LATEST
4	

GOTESCO CINEMA

City
(Manila) tel 734.8588

1 (DOLBY)	EXIT WOUNDS
2	RESERVE
3	RESERVE
4	BALIKTARAN
5	MAY ISANG PUSO
6	NARINIG MO NA BA ANG LATEST
7 (DTS)	SOMEONE LIKE YOU
8 (SDDS)	LUCKY NUMBER
9 (DOLBY)	15 MINUTES

Caloocan
tel 362.3508

2	MAY ISANG PUSO

Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 364.3781

1	NARINIG MO NA BA ANG LATEST
2	BALIKTARAN
3	HALIK NG SERENA
4 (SDDS)	MAY ISANG PUSO
5	15 MINUTES
6 (DOLBY)	EXIT WOUNDS
7 (DTS)	SOMEONE LIKE YOU
8	EXTREME WARRIOR
9	SUGAR & SPICE

Commonwealth
tel 951.0083

1 (DTS)	EXIT WOUNDS
2	NARINIG MO NA BA ANG LATEST
3	HALIK NG SERENA
4	MAY ISANG PUSO
5 (SDDS)	15 MINUTES
6	RESERVE
7 (DOLBY)	BALIKTARAN
8	RESERVE

Ortigas
tel 656.6795

1	NARINIG MO BA ANG LATEST
2	BALIKTARAN
3 (DTS)	MAY ISANG PUSO
4	15 MINUTES
5 (SDDS)	EXIT WOUNDS

Universal
(Manila) tel 733.2470

1	MAY ISANG PUSO

Sampaguita
(Cubao) tel 911.7888

1	MAY ISANG PUSO

Dilson
(Manila) tel 734.7724

Dilson	MAY ISANG PUSO
Lords	BEDROOM SECRET
Jennet	WINASAK

THE MARKETPLACE Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

1	MAY ISANG PUSO
2	EXIT WOUNDS
3	RESERVE
4	BALIKTARAN

Prima
(Pasig) tel 641 1215

1	
3	HALIK NG SERENA

Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto
SUPER CINERAMA tel 733.4238

1 (DOLBY)	EXIT WOUNDS
2	MAY ISANG PUSO
3	NARINIG MO NA BA ANG LATEST
4	15 MINUTES
5	BALIKTARAN

New Divisoria Mall CINEMA
tel 244.4619

1	MAY ISANG PUSO
2	NARINIG MO NA BA ANG LATEST
3	BALIKTARAN
4	RESERVE
5	EXIT WOUNDS
6	RESERVE

Baclaran LRT CINEMA
tel 512.0115

1 (DOLBY)	BALIKTARAN
2	MAY ISANG PUSO
3	EXIT WOUNDS
4	
5	

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa Laguna)
tel (049) 534.2185 / 534 2198

1	MADERASO
2	BALIKTARAN
3 (DTS)	EXIT WOUNDS

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1	SAY IT ISN'T SO
2 (DTS)	3,000 MILES TO GRACELAND
3 (DOLBY)	EXIT WOUNDS
4	BALIKTARAN

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS)	EXIT WOUNDS
2	BALIKTARAN
3	THE SEDUCER
4 (DTS)	15 MINUTES

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545 7207

1 (DOLBY)	BALIKTARAN
2	MADERASO
3 (DTS)	EXIT WOUNDS
4	EXTREME WARRIORS
5	3,000 MILES TO GRACELAND

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8613

1	BALIKTARAN
2	3,000 MILES TO GRACELAND
3	THE CROW

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 536.5101

1	BALIKTARAN
2	3,000 MILES TO GRACELAND
3	THE CROW

Olivarez Tagaytay
tel (046) 413.0311

1
2
3

Morales Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511 9736

1	EXIT WOUNDS
2	BALIKTARAN
3	3,000 MILES TO GRACELAND

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel (049) 531.4808

1 (DTS)	BALIKTARAN
2 (DTS)	MADERASO

Fourstep
(Cavite) tel (046) 416.2385

1	BALIKTARAN

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

1	HALIK NG SERENA
2	3,000 MILES TO GRACELAND
3	BALIKTARAN

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1	HALIK NG SERENA
2	THE MEXICAN
3	3,000 MILES TO GRACELAND
4	EXIT WOUNDS

Berma
tel 879 2168

1	HALIK NG SERENA
2	EXIT WOUNDS

CitiMall
(Parañaque) tel 820.7269

1	RESERVE
2	BALIKTARAN
3	RESERVE
4	EXIT WOUNDS

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 (DOLBY EX)	EXIT WOUNDS
2	HALIK NG SERENA
3	BALIKTARAN
4 (DTS EX)	SOMEONE LIKE YOU

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Eddie K at Cassaluna

EDDIE KATINDIG, the country's most celebrated saxophonist, will serenade the Malate's nocturnal set with a show titled "Summer Breeze" on May 10, Thursday, 9 p.m. at the Cassaluna Bar and Restaurant.

Joining Eddie K will be his son, Henry Katindig on keyboards and songbird Jeannie Tiongco.

Eddie K will play his well-loved OPM compositions, as well as light pop and jazz hits.

Cassaluna, Malate's newest watering hole, offers a variety of Spanish, Italian, French and Filipino food, aside from its all-time favorites, and has a full bar to complement the good food.

Among Cassaluna's house specialties are such Spanish delights as its signature Paella Cassaluna and Lengua con Setas, and the native Kapampangan sisig.

The restaurant also offers a wide variety of coffee concoctions and frozen margaritas.

Dada West Adriano, general manager of the restaurant, promises that every night at Cassaluna will be filled with "good food, good music and good times."

Cassaluna is open daily, from 6 p.m. to 2 a.m. and features nightly entertainment from Monday to Friday, with lady singers Jeannie Tiongco, Gigi Aragon and Stella Ignacio, with music director Tony Neri as keyboardist from Mondays to Thursdays.

The Oasys Band performs every Friday night.

Saturdays are open nights for parties, concerts and special events.

Admission at the Eddie K concert is free, but with a minimum P500 in consumable orders on food and drinks per person.

Cassaluna is located at 1148 Pablo Ocampo Sr. (formerly Vito Cruz) corner Jacobo Streets, Malate, Manila with a spacious and well-guarded parking lot.

For inquiries, contact Cassaluna at 536-3843 to 44.

SAXOPHONIST
Eddie Katindig

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5. THE SEDUCER
6. EXTREME WARRIORS

DOLBY dts SDDS

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

ARANETA CENTER THEATERS 911-3101	
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-1	HALIK NG SIRENA
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-2	BALIKTARAN
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-3 (DDS)	NARINIG MO NA BA ANG LATEST
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-4 (SDDS)	EXIT WOUNDS
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS)	SAY IT ISN'T SO
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY)	RECESS SCHOOL'S OUT
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7 (DOLBY)	SUGAR & SPICE
FARMERS PLAZA-1 (DOLBY)	EXIT WOUNDS
FARMERS PLAZA-2 (DOLBY)	BALIKTARAN
FIESTA CARNIVAL	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
NEW FRONTIER	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	EXIT WOUNDS
MIRAMAR	VIRGIN WIFE/TOO MUCH FLESH
ODEON	15 MINUTES
ODEON-2	EXIT WOUNDS
ROBEN	BALIKTARAN
TANDEM-1	ALIW MATAMIS NA LASON
TANDEM-2	EVANGELINE 14
TIMES	HANNIBAL WAY OF GUN
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	CLOSED
ACT-4	CLOSED
CORONET-2	15 MINUTES
QUEZON-1	EXIT WOUNDS
REMAR	EXIT WOUNDS
REMAR-2	NARINIG MO NA BA ANG LATEST
CUBAO	
OCEAN SUPERAMA	BABAENG PUTIK
OCEAN CINEMA-A	PANABLA
OCEAN CINEMA-B	CRISELDA
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635 20-79, 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	EXIT WOUNDS
CINEMA-2	SOMEONE LIKE YOU
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-54091 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	BALIKTARAN
CINEMA-2	3,000 MILES TO GRACELAND
CINEMA-3	HALIK NG SIRENA
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	RECESS: SCHOOL'S OUT
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	EXTREME WARRIORS
CINEMA-6	ABAKADA.. INA
CINEMA-7	INIT NG DUGO
CINEMA-8	NARINIG MO NA BA ANG LATEST
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	EXIT WOUNDS
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	THE MEXICAN
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	SUGAR & SPICE
CINEMA-12	SAY IT ISN'T SO
CINEMA-14	BALIKTARAN
CINEMA-15	NARINIG MO NA BA ANG LATEST
LORES	
CINEMA-2	CLOSED
CINEMA-3	CLOSED
POWER PLANT CINEMA	
CINEMA-1	SUGAR & SPICE
CINEMA-2	15 MINUTES
CINEMA-3	EXIT WOUNDS
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Hear the Difference, Feel the Excitement

Star turns

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

WHAT are the movies' top stars up to these days? Working in front of the camera, that's what—and in showy vehicles intended to give their careers a boost:

Marlon Brando, who hasn't made a movie in years, finally faces the cameras anew in "The Score," where he conspires with **Robert De Niro** and **Edward Norton** on a complicated heist.

Nicolas Cage and **Penelope Cruz** play an Italian officer and a Greek maiden, respectively, in "Captain Corelli's Mandolin." The period romance takes place during World War Two.

Mark Wahlberg steps into **Charlton Heston**'s big shoes in **Tim Burton**'s new take on the classic sci-fi film, "Planet of the Apes." Also in the stellar cast are **Helena Bonham Carter** and **Tim Roth.**

David Duchovny has another go at screen stardom with "Evolution," where he and **Julianne Moore** engage in a battle with some aliens.

Ben Affleck leads an all-star cast in "Pearl Harbor," **Jerry Bruckheimer** and **Michael Bay**'s big-budget war epic.

Musical films are produced only occasionally these days, which is why **Nicole Kidman** and **Ewan McGregor** cleared their schedules so they could topbill **Baz Luhrmann**'s "Moulin Rouge," set in a sleazy Parisian dive in 1900.

And the most unusual star turn of them all is **Pete Postelthwaite**'s portrayal in "Rat" of a man who terrifies his family when he turns into—a white rodent!

Director's cut

IT'S good to hear that **Ronnie Ricketts** is making movies again. His comeback vehicle as star and director is "Mano-Mano 2," in which his leading lady is his wife **Mariz.**

Ricketts' past actioners were characterized by interesting plot twists, believable performances and imaginatively conceptualized action scenes.

Also back in the director's chair is **Rowell Santiago**, who's megging "Luv Text," a trendy youth movie topbilling **Judy Ann Santos** and **Wowie de Guzman.**

Feedback

FROM **Elaine C. Correo** of Pasay City: "I like watching public-affairs shows on TV because they make me think and help me understand the complex issues that crop up from time to time. But they are telecast so late in the night that I can barely keep my eyes open.

"Often, in fact, I start dozing off even before the shows have ended. The spirit is willing, but the time slot is so late!

"Why do important public-affairs shows keep getting relegated to the midnight hour, while inane sitcoms are shown during primetime? This shows how out of focus our TV stations' priorities are. At the latest, public-affairs programs should be scheduled at 10 p.m.

"I hope our TV channels will make it easier for us viewers to get to see good shows before dropping off to dreamland . . ."

'American Beauty' on HBO

HBO screens Best Picture Oscar winner "American Beauty" at 9 p.m. on May 12. The acclaimed movie deals with the realities faced by a dysfunctional American family in a typical WASP suburb.

"American Beauty" won four other Oscars: Best Actor (**Kevin Spacey**), Best Original Screenplay (**Allan Ball**), Best Director (**Sam Mendes**) and Best Cinematography (**Conrad Hall**).

Mother's Day movie specials

VIVA Cinema salutes mothers this month with movie treats every Saturday at 8 p.m,.

On May 12, **Susan Roces** and **Angelu de Leon** star in "Isinakdal Ko ang Aking Ina." Susan plays a mother who is sued for negligence by her long-lost daughter (Angelu).

On May 19, "Bukas May Pangarap" topbills **Gina Alajar**, **Tommy Abuel** and **Ruben Rustia.** Tommy is duped by an illegal recruiter, so his wife (Gina) has to keep their family together.

On May 26, "Narito ang Puso Ko" stars **Lorna Tolentino** as a courageous mother who fights for justice for the death of her son.

Jullie tells the people again

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Leah Salterio

DEBUTING on ANC is the weekly show of editor and columnist **Jullie Yap-Daza**, who returns with her classic, hard-hitting but informative chat show, "Tell the People Now," starting May 11, 9 p.m.

Jullie ends her saucy eponymous Friday night program, "Jullie," on ABS-CBN to join ANC.

"My show has run its course," Jullie says. "The network wants to put more public affairs show and news-oriented programs on ANC. I feel good about it because I will be in the company of journalists."

In "Tell the People Now," Jullie promises to give the old bite that has made "Tell the People," her long-running show then aired on RPN 9, a hit with the viewers.

"Tell the People," which aired for 17 years, pioneered the interactive and politically charged fare on the late-night time slot, a trend that continues up to this day.

SIGUION-REYNA.

"The new show on ANC will have three segments—politics, society and show biz," Jullie informs. "For every episode, we will touch on the biggest current topics."

Jullie considers her experience in print journalism a big edge in TV hosting.

"It's an extreme advantage to be a journalist," she says. "My work as a print journalist prepared me for TV.

"When I do my TV interviews, it's like working on a lead. The first sentence is usually the hardest part of writing a story. Sometimes, you even agonize on it. On TV, after the first question, everything will be free-flowing. You can do the rest easily."

Armida's 'Aawitan'

THE THEME of **Armida Siguion-Reyna**'s three decades old musical television program, "Aawitan Kita," is so familiar to many Filipinos it is almost part of Philippine folk music.

The original composition by **Leopoldo Silos** (who also composed "Dahil sa Isang Bulaklak") is also being used as a ringing tone by some mobile phone users.

Even when she focused her efforts on other things, like acting in and producing movies, and being chair of the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board, Armida has never abandoned "Aawitan Kita," which continues to air today as a monthly special on GMA 7.

The concept of producing a musical program came about while Armida was chatting with her close friend **Oscar Miranda**, who was then working for the advertising agency McCann Erickson.

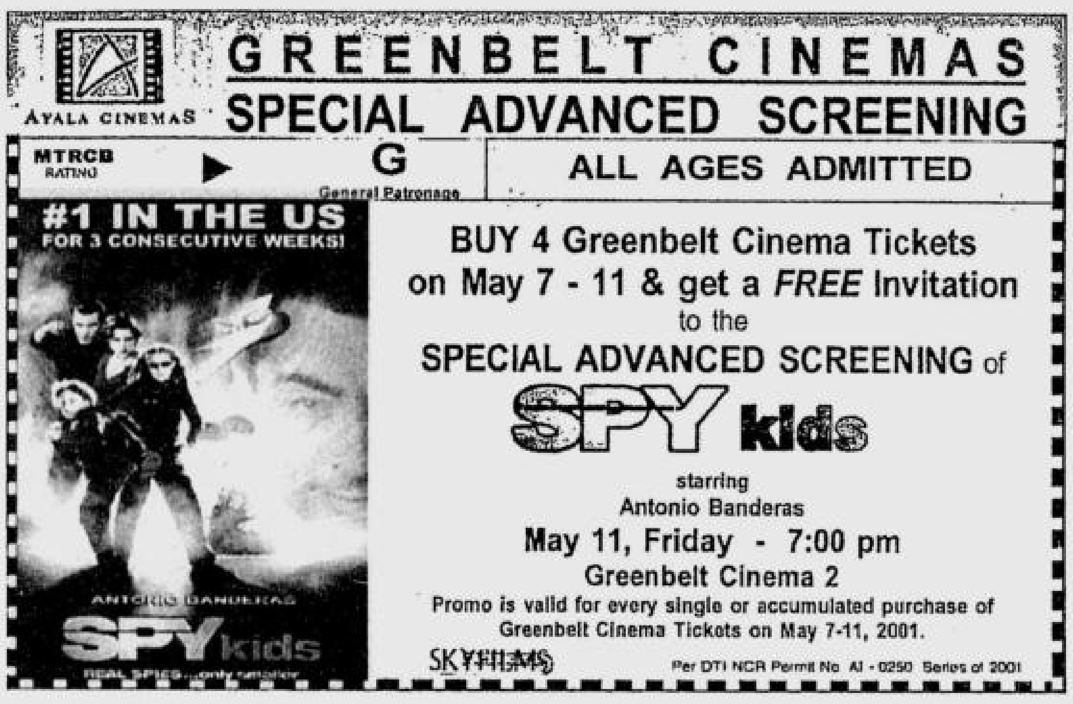
"I've always been very fond of music," says Armida. "I was trained to be an opera singer. Unfortunately, opera didn't like my voice. I got bad reviews when I was singing opera."

When the musical special started airing, Armida spent a maximum of P5,000 to produce one episode. Today, the budget for the one-hour show is P100,000.

"Aawitan Kita" has paved the way for the musical careers of many of today's singers. **Rachel Alejandro** was only 13 when she first started singing *kundiman* in the show. **Lirio Vital** was 14 when she first sang in the program.

Other artists who became regulars on the show were **Robert Natividad, Aurelio Estanislao, Richard Reynoso, Michael Laygo, Isabel Granada, Bimbo Cerrudo, Tootsie Guevarra, Chris Villonco, Francis Batamalaque** and **Rachel Herodias.**

Armida used "Aawitan Kita" as one of her official campaign names in her current political campaign. She is running for a congressional seat in Makati City.



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Say heil to singer - actor Christian Wunderlich

CHRISTIAN Wunderlich (pronounced *wunderlish*) is a 21-year-old performer from Germany who has managed to do what few celebrities have achieved: successfully combine careers in acting and singing.

Wunderlich has proved himself to be a versatile actor, starring in several German TV series.

TOMORROW the world—Christian Wunderlich has just released a self-titled album to further his conquest of stage and screen.

He has also recorded two albums in Germany. His first single "That's My Way To Say Good-bye" was an instant hit in the German charts going straight to No. 12.

Other hits from the two albums are "In Heaven," "So In Love" and "Forever Tonight," a duet with Kirstin Hall.

BMG Records (Pili-pinas) Inc. has just released "Christian Wunderlich," the self-titled Asian debut album featuring 13 of the best tracks from his two previous albums, which were specially selected to fit the Asian market.

Several songs from the album, ranging from straight pop tunes to sentimental ballads, were cowritten with Wunderlich.

The first single off this Asian debut is the heart-breaking ballad "Why Goodbye," penned by hit-maker Diane Warren, which is starting to garner raves among local listeners, particularly those tuned in to the ballad stations.

The album also contains a bonus track, "Two Hearts Can Beat As One," a duet with our very own Anna Fegi.

See Christian Wun-derlich perform live as support act to Westlife's upcoming Coast-To-Coast Concert Tour on May 29 at the Araneta Coliseum.

Grab your copy of the Christian Wun-derlich album at all participating New Radio City and Music 1 outlet and get the chance join the Christian Wunderlich Album Promo Raffle.

The winner will get two tickets to the Coast-To-Coast Concert Tour 2001.

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4 SAY IT ISN'T SO - P 13 1:40, 3:45, 5:50, 7:55, 10:00	5 LUCKY NUMBERS - P 13 11:30, 1:45, 4:00, 6:15, 8:30, 10:40	6 SOMEONE LIKE YOU - P 13

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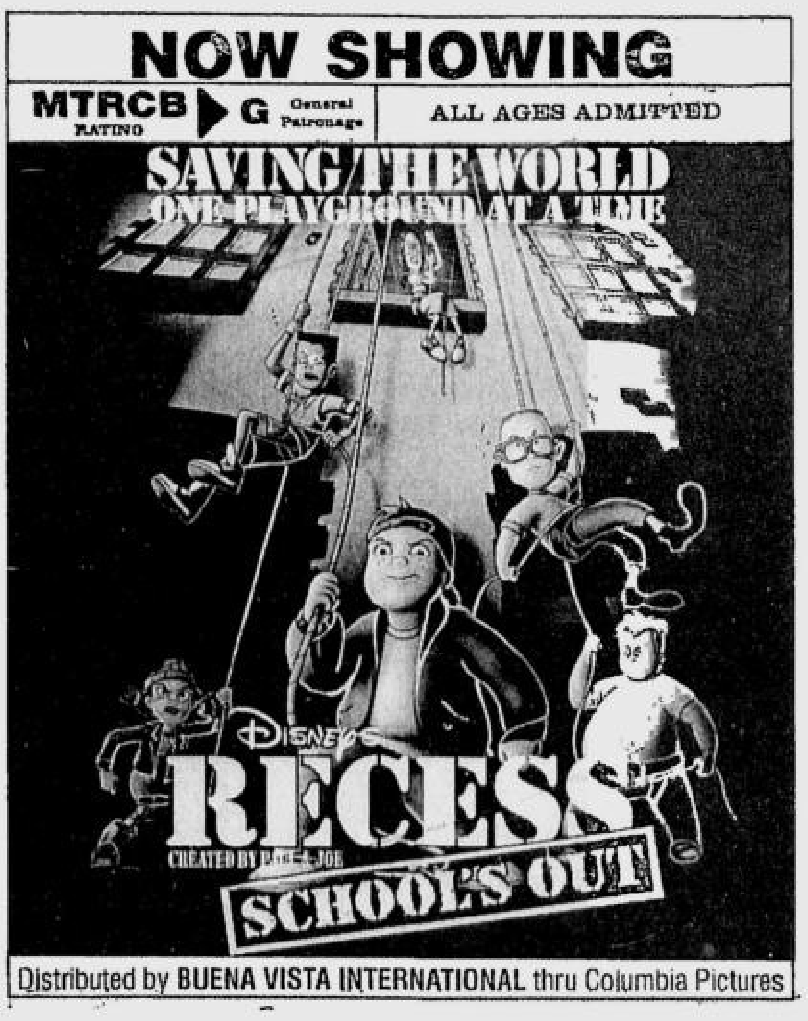

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ENTERTAINMENT

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

VETERAN comediennes Dely Atay-atayan (seated, left) and Chuchi receive their lifetime achievement awards from Vic Vargas, German Moreno and Bella Flores during the Film Academy of the Philippines awards night.

MIKE ALQUINTO

No-shows mar 19th FAP awards night

BY ALEX Y. VERGARA

NEVER stage an awards night at the height of the campaign season, especially soon after a failed power grab. Movie stars, at least the big ones, are bound to stage a no-show.

People behind the Film Academy of the Philippines learned this for themselves too late when they gave out awards Saturday night at the Manila Hotel's Fiesta Pavilion.

It was a swift and lackluster affair with more than half of the winners in various categories missing. The show was also the shortest of its kind in recent memory. It began a few minutes past eight and was over 15 minutes before eleven.

Of the four winners in various acting categories, only Gloria Romero showed up. For playing an aging mother with Alzheimer's disease in "Tanging Yaman," Romero won her first best actress award from her peers.

"To all my fellow actors, you made me so happy," said Romero in Filipino. "I'll never forget this wonderful night."

The inspirational melodrama produced by Star Cinema also won best picture, best director for Laurice Guillen and best sound for Ramon Reyes. Guillen was missing as well.

For some reason, Eddie Garcia (best actor, "Deathrow"), Pen Medina (best supporting actor, "Deathrow") and Amy Austria (best supporting actress, "Anak) were absent.

Established 19 years ago by people in the movie industry, the FAP is patterned after America's Academy or Oscar awards. As such voters from various guilds within the industry determine the winners by casting their votes.

Getting the recognition of one's peers is considered by many in the movie industry as the most fulfilling award one can win. FAP, however, also has its share of controversies over the years.

One of the biggest crisis that rocked the body was the withdrawal of members belonging to the Directors' Guild of the Philippines Inc. two years ago.

Before that, the group, composed of the likes of Jose Javier Reyes, Joel Lamangan and Marilou Diaz-Abaya, separated years earlier from the Kapisanan ng mga Direktor ng Pelikulang Pilipino, the original director's guild.

Surprisingly, both Lamangan and Reyes were still nominated for best director for their work in "Deathrow" and "Bukas na lang Kita Mamahalin," respectively.

Other winners were: Ricky Lee (best screenplay, "Anak"), Romulo Araojo (best cinematography, "Azucena"), Jess Navarro (best film editing, "Deathrow") and Joey Luna (best production design, "Deathrow").

FAP failed to give an award for best musical scoring. Composer Vehnee Saturno, the lone nominee for best theme song, won by virtual default for his work in "Abandonada."

Awards were also given to Nonoy Regalado (best documentary, "Marsh Land") and several masscom students of UP (best student film, "Kabalintunaan").

Veteran comediennes Dely Atay-Atayan and wheelchair-bound Chuchi were each honored with a lifetime achievement award.

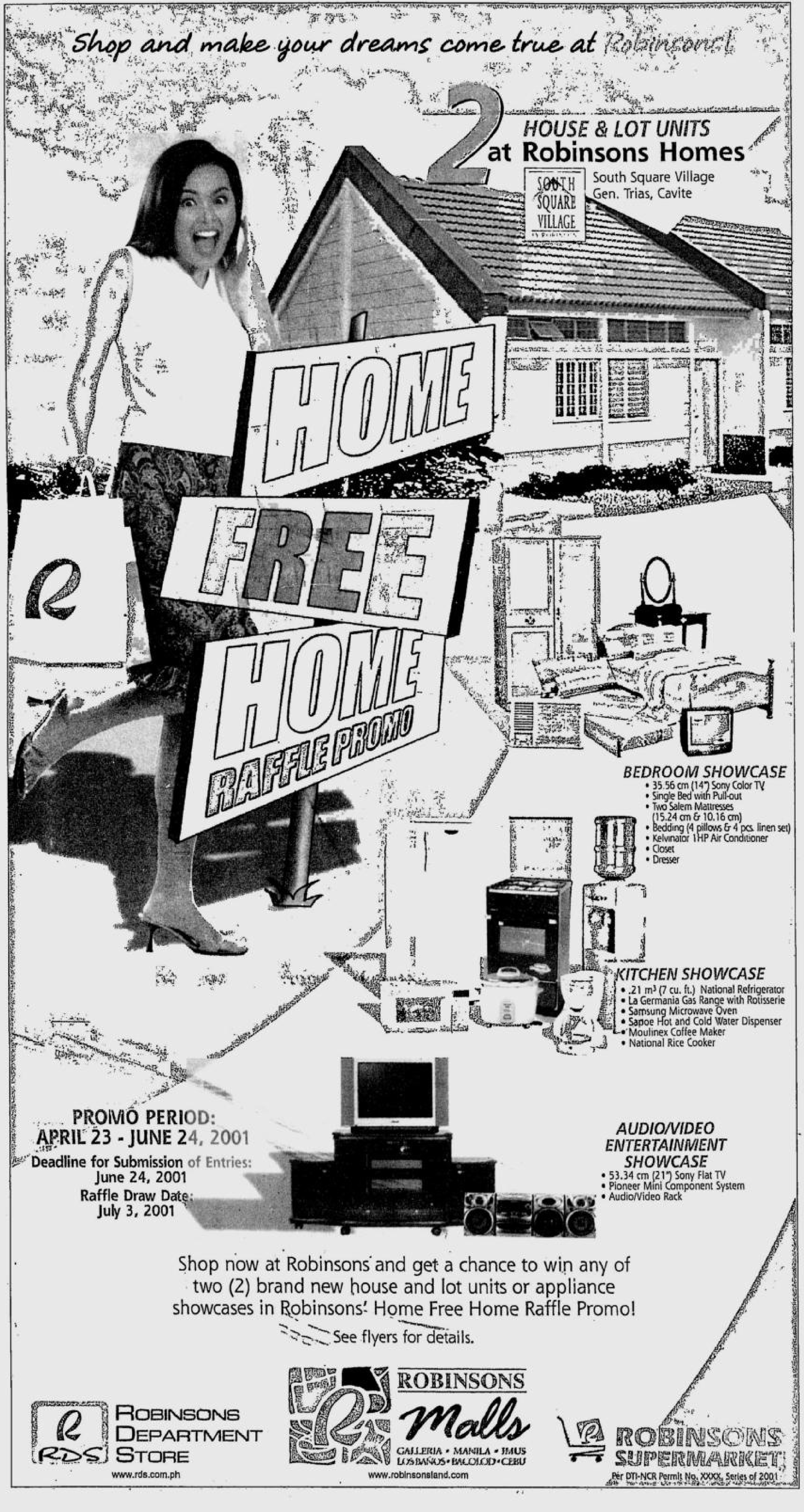
Despite the drab affair, a few gems managed to shine. Zsa Zsa Padilla, in an asymmetrical off-white number by Rajo Laurel, won "star of the night" (*watch out for INQUIRER Lifestyle's fashion pages this Friday*).

Cherie Gil also made heads turn in a strapless royal blue gown with flowing accent also in royal blue and fuchsia by favorite designer Inno Sotto. For her efforts, she won "face of the night."

Together with father Eddie Mesa, brother Mark Gil and nephew Ryan Eigenman, Gil sang the "Handog," FAP's theme song.

GLORIA Romero shows off her best actress trophy for her portrayal of the matriarch wracked by Alzheimer's disease in "Tanging Yaman."

MIKE ALQUINTO



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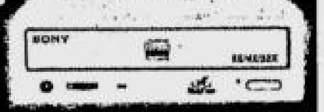
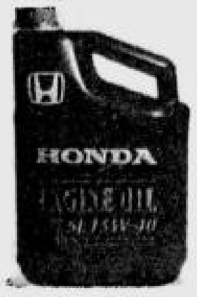


WEDNESDAY, MAY 9, 2001 PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER B1

BUSINESS

RAUL O. MARCELO, Editor ▣ CORRIE S. NARISMA, Assistant Editor



ENGINE OIL
Formulated for Honda Engines
HONDA

4-month budget gap hits ₱38.75B

By Clarissa S. Batino

TIGHT spending by the Macapagal administration has allowed it to limit the budget deficit in the first four months of the year to an estimated P38.75 billion, or only P824 million more than the first quarter shortfall.

Although it was 34.14 percent lower than the four-month target of P58.831 billion, the deficit was 192 percent higher than the year-ago level of P13.28 billion.

Government sources blamed the lackluster collection of the Bureau of Internal Revenue for the deteriorating budget gap despite the administration's belt-tightening measures.

The actual deficit from January to March was at P37.925 billion from an earlier estimate of P38.91 billion as announced by outgoing Finance Secretary Alberto Romulo.

The final four-month deficit level would be announced in the middle of this month, according to a ranking finance official.

The government is bent on limiting its budget gap this year to P145 billion or 3.8 percent of gross domestic product (GDP).

The Development Budget Coordinating Council, in its recent meeting, raised the possibility of even bringing down the deficit to P130 billion, or lower than last year's P136.1 billion.

Based on preliminary data released by the government, spending in the first four months of the year was contained at P221.05 billion or 3.29 percent lower than the target expenditures of P228.587 billion.

The P7.5-billion leeway provided by lower spending was offset by a rising shortfall of government agencies, particularly the BIR whose shortfall from January to April swelled to P10.669 billion as revenue collection in the first four months reached only P134.442 billion against a target of P145.208 billion.

A government source said the BIR posted a P4-billion shortfall in its programmed collection in April, a tax-payment season when the revenue-collecting body was expected to register a healthy surplus.

Last year, healthy BIR collections during the tax payment season helped bring down the deficit in April from the first-quarter level of P22.31 billion.

The Bureau of Customs also missed its target by P1.59 billion with actual collection of P28.316 billion in the first four months of the year.

Only the Bureau of Treasury surpassed its target of P5.661 billion with revenues of P8 billion from January to April. Government agencies that collect fees had raised P11.509 billion in the first four months against a target of P9.543 billion during the period.

Next year, the deficit is projected to decline to P125 billion or about 2.8 percent of GDP.

The failure of the government to rein in the deficit last year further eroded confidence of investors and creditors in the Philippine economy and even led to the failure of the government to complete its three-year $1.4-billion loan program with the International Monetary Fund.

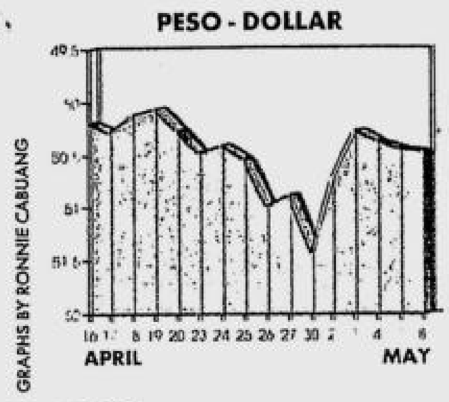
The foreign community is keenly monitoring the efforts of the government in containing the deficit.

The government said the BIR could not improve revenue collection while the economy has not completely recovered from the political crisis that crippled business from October last year to early this year.

"Businesses have not picked up and it would take four to six months before their operations would normalize. For the meantime, earnings have not improved, which is why BIR collection is also limited," Romulo had noted in an earlier interview.

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



Peso-Dollar Rate

₱50.46 = $1
As of 5 p.m., May 8, 2001

¥121.62 = $1
The US dollar was trading at 121.62 as of 5 p.m., May 8, 2001

GOLD:$265.40/265.90
per ounce Hong Kong, May 8, 2001

May 8, 2001

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.122965	1.000000	50.5040
Japan	Yen	0.009273	0.008258	0.4171
United Kingdom	Pound	1.615722	1.438800	72.6652
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.267515	0.238222	12.0312
Switzerland	Franc	0.648587	0.577567	29.1694
Canada	Dollar	0.728677	0.648887	32.7714
Singapore	Dollar	0.614986	0.547645	27.6583
Australia	Dollar	0.580115	0.516592	26.0900
Bahrain	Dinar	2.967615	2.642661	133.4650
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.299441	0.266652	13.4670
Brunei	Dollar	0.614347	0.547076	27.6295
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000103	0.000092	0.0046
Thailand	Baht	0.024627	0.021930	1.1076
UAE	Dirham	0.305777	0.272294	13.7519
Korea	Won	0.000866	0.000771	0.0389
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.890500	44.9738
Germany	Mark	0.511291	0.455305	22.9947
France	Franc	0.152450	0.135756	6.8562
Netherlands	Guilder	0.453780	0.404091	20.4082
Austria	Schilling	0.072673	0.064715	3.2684
Belgium	Franc	0.024789	0.022075	1.1149
Italy	Lire	0.000517	0.000460	0.0232
Finland	Markka	0.168188	0.149771	7.5640
Portugal	Escudo	0.004988	0.004442	0.2243
Spain	Peseta	0.006010	0.005352	0.2703
Luxemburg	Franc	0.024789	0.022075	1.1149
Ireland	Punt	1.269738	1.130702	57.1050

STOCK MARKET

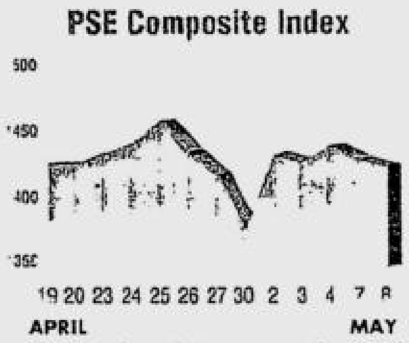
Political jitters weigh on shares

STOCKS finished a shade lower yesterday as political nervousness ahead of the May 14 election continued to hang over sentiment, traders said.

With the number of election-related killings on the rise and continued fears about the potential for further civil disturbances, investors are staying out of the market for now, traders said.

"There is still the worry on the political side . . . the election is next week and there has been more and more violence recently raising concern about the peacefulness of the election," said Mercantile Securities marketing officer Warren Chu.

The main composite index closed down 4.63 points, or 0.32 percent, at 1,427.28. Turnover rose to P567.63 million from P466.5 million on Monday but Chua said a big proportion of the total came in a single cross transaction of 8.2 million Chinatrust Bank shares at P18.25 each. *Reuters*



(See stock market report on Page B4)

Infocom ties up with HK firm

INTERNET service provider Infocom Technologies Inc. has tied up with Hong Kong-based broadband infrastructure firm SpeedCast Ltd. to make a number of cable TV programs accessible online.

The first in the country, the partnership enables Infocom subscribers to have free online access to SpeedCast's more than 30 multimedia channels of live, uninterrupted, round-the-clock cable TV programs in various languages.

These TV channels include Bloomberg USA and Bloomberg Asia, ChannelNewsAsia, Yahoo!, three Fashion TV channels, and a host of multicultural contents such as Arirang TV, MCM, and China Reel, among others.

Online access to such channels does not require any additional software. The streaming content is viewable using Microsoft Windows media player, which comes free with any Microsoft Windows operating system.

SpeedCast delivers multimedia content using its satellite IP (Internet protocol) network to bypass Internet congestion and minimize packet loss, thus optimizing bandwidth delivery of video content to ensure high quality viewing.

Infocom is the Internet firm of local dominant carrier Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co.

INTEREST RATES

DAILY STATISTICAL INDICATORS

May 8, 2001

PARTICULARS	Today	Previous Day	Week Ago	Month Ago	Year Ago
Bangko Sentral R/P Rates (% p.a.) 1/ 08 May 2001					
Overnight R/P	11.7500	11.7500	O.H.	12.2500	12.2500
Term R/P	N.Q.	N.Q.	O.H.	N.Q.	N.Q.
Interbank Call Loan Rate (% p.a.) 07 May 2001					
Weighted Ave.	9.7813	9.6563	9.6563	O.H.	9.2500
High	10.5000	10.5000	10.5000	O.H.	10.2500
Low	9.5000	9.5000	9.5625	O.H.	9.0625
Promissory Note Rates (% p.a.) 2/ 07 May 2001					
60 Days	N.T.	N.T.	N.T.	O.H.	9.0732
90 Days	N.T.	N.T.	N.T.	O.H.	N.T.
180 Days	N.T.	N.T.	N.T.	O.H.	N.T.
Foreign Interest Rates (% p.a.)					
90-day LIBOR	London Holiday	4.2700	4.3400	4.7400	6.7000
90-day SIBOR	4.3000	4.3000	4.3500	4.7300	6.6900
180-day LIBOR	London Holiday	4.2200	4.3000	4.5200	6.9100
180-day SIBOR	4.2500	4.2500	4.2800	4.5300	6.9300

Vehicle sales down 15% in January-April

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

SALES of passenger cars and commercial vehicles slipped for the 7th straight month in April as coup jitters kept dealer showrooms virtually empty and labor unrest at the country's biggest assembler led to a steep production shortfall last month.

The Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers of the Philippines Inc. reported yesterday that sales tumbled 14.7 percent to 23,134 units in the first four months this year from 27,109 units during the same period last year.

Campi secretary general Mario de Grano said it has been a frustrating election season for the industry, which traditionally enjoys a mini-boom in turnover during campaigns as candidates buy new vehicles to push their bid for public office.

Aside from having fewer working days, De Grano said the political crisis, which culminated in the failed labor day siege of Malacañang, has badly shaken consumer confidence that it would take a few more months before the industry could regain its bearing.

"This has cast doubts on our ability to meet our target this year," De Grano said. Campi has forecast flat sales for the year after rebounding by 12.8 percent to 83,949 units last year.

The battered consumer confidence has been worsened by the forced stoppage in the production of the best-selling Tamaraw Revo as Toyota Motors Philippines Corp. had to close down its Bicutan and Sta. Rosa plants last month.

Toyota maintained its pole position in the industry with a 24.5-percent share or 5,659 units sold in the first four months this year.

Mitsubishi Motor Philippines Corp. nearly closed the gap with rival Toyota as it jacked up its share to 22.6 percent with 5,222 units sold from January to April this year.

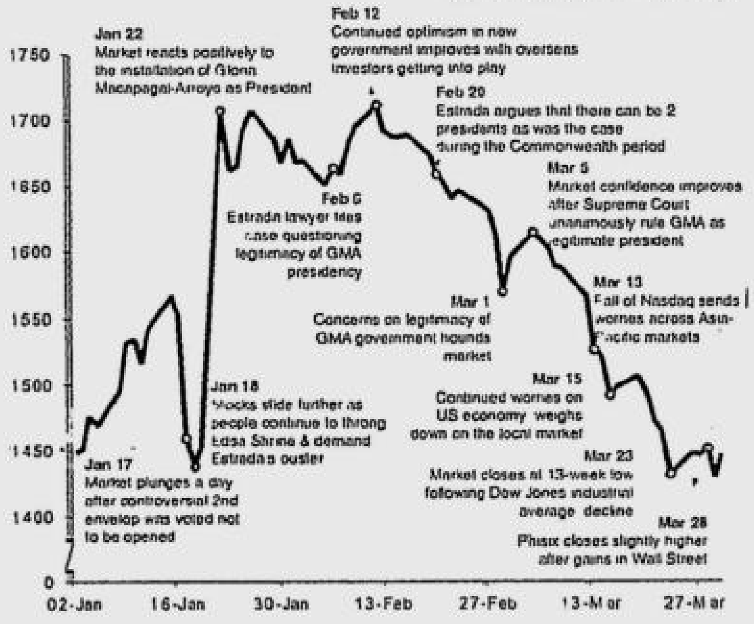
Honda Cars Philippines Inc. sold 3,004 units or 13 percent of the market as the new Civic model remained as the leading passenger car brand. Isuzu Philippines Corp. was fourth with an 11-percent market share or 2,578 units sold.

INQUIRER MONITOR

Figures that matter in our nation's life

Phisix

(1st quarter 2001)



1750
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02-Jan
16-Jan
30-Jan
13-Feb
27-Feb
13-Mar
27-Mar
Jan 22 Market reacts positively to the installation of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo as President
Feb 12 Continued optimism in new government improves with overseas investors getting into play
Feb 20 Estrada argues that there can be 2 presidents as was the case during the Commonwealth period
Mar 5 Market confidence improves after Supreme Court unanimously rule GMA as legitimate president
Feb 6 Estrada lawyer files case questioning legitimacy of GMA presidency
Mar 13 Fall of Nasdaq sends worries across Asia-Pacific markets
Mar 1 Concerns on legitimacy of GMA government hounds market
Jan 18 Stocks slide further as people continue to throng Edsa Shrine & demand Estrada's ouster
Mar 15 Continued worries on US economy weighs down on the local market
Jan 17 Market plunges a day after controversial 2nd envelop was voted not to be opened
Mar 23 Market closes at 13-week low following Dow Jones industrial average decline
Mar 28 Phisix closes slightly higher after gains in Wall Street

Source: Technistock

Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research

20% STAKE

Banco de Oro to pursue IPO

By Elena R. Torrijos

BANCO de Oro Universal Bank, owned by retail magnate Henry Sy, may offer as much as 20 percent of its total stake to the public through an initial public offering later this year, Banco de Oro chair Teresita Sy-Coson said.

The IPO, together with other pending transactions of the bank including the merger with the Manila unit of Hong Kong-based Dao Heng Bank, is expected to boost the bank's paid-up capital to P12 billion from P5.6 billion.

"We're required to go into (an IPO for) 10 percent but we may go into 20 percent of the total value (of Banco de Oro)," Coson said in an interview.

Under the rules of the BSP, Banco de Oro is required to list at least 10 percent of its shares to the public within three years of getting its universal bank license. The bank was supposed to have gone public over two years ago but has gotten several deadline extensions from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas since then.

Banco de Oro has already completed a functional merger with Dao Heng Bank, but the merger transaction has yet to be approved by the BSP.

The bank is also in the process of converting P3.5 billion in preferred shares to common shares.

It is also entering into a share-swap that would allow the bank to own its Ortigas-based headquarters as well as the adjacent property. Meanwhile, a Cayman Islands-registered mutual fund, Cambridge Pacific, is investing at least P2 billion into the local universal bank, which aims to go public by September or October this year following the conclusion of the other transactions.

Banco de Oro, which earlier filed a prospectus for its IPO offering, has tapped BPI Capital as the underwriter of the issue.

The bank plans to file an updated prospectus with regulatory agencies in order to reflect the entry of Cambridge Pacific, the merger with Dao Heng Bank, the share-swap and the conversion of preferred shares into common shares.

Banco de Oro is targeting an IPO price in the low teens or 1.5 times the book value, a bank official said.

HSBC sees peso recovery to 49 to $1

FOREIGN bank HSBC Corp. is expecting the peso to recover to 49 to $1 by the end of the year and the economy to pick up slightly by the second semester provided the political situation continues to stabilize.

John McGowan, treasurer of HSBC's Manila unit, said the peso could even rebound to 47 to $1 if the government could address the political situation and the budget deficit decisively in the succeeding months.

HSBC

"Provided there would be no political upheavals during and after the elections and if the government shows it is seriously addressing the budget deficit then this could lead to higher direct and portfolio investments which could help improve the peso," McGowan said.

HSBC had projected early this year that the peso would weaken to 52 to $1 within the first quarter. The currency dipped to 51.45 to $1 last April 30, its lowest level under the Macapagal administration. The foreign bank also projected a dismal 1.7-percent growth in the country's gross domestic product this year.

"There is a better chance for the economy to pick up on the second half but a lot will depend on the US economy," said McGowan who explained that for as long as the US economy remains in a slump, growth in the local economy would be limited.

A foreseen slowdown in export growth this year to 4 percent from 8.7 percent last year would drag down growth in GDP this year to only 3.8 percent from a range of as much as 4.3 percent.

Bangko Sentral Governor Rafael Buenaventura said he believed the economy would rebound in the second half given signals that US authorities were seriously addressing the economy's slowdown. The recovery, he said, would open opportunities anew for local exports.

"As long as there would be no more shocks that we can't foresee, I think the peso would trade below 50 to $1 by the end of the year," the HSBC treasurer said.

McGowan had ruled out, however, any aggressive movement in the peso or even in portfolio and direct investments until after the May 14 elections.

The foreign banker said that after the dust had settled following the May 1 declaration of a state of rebellion, the key issue with foreign investors and ratings firms remained the budget deficit.

PLDT profit up 472% in 1st quarter

By Anthony O. Alcantara

PHILIPPINE Long Distance Telephone Co.'s net profit for the first quarter of 2001 surged by 472 percent to P628.9 million from only P110 million in the same period a year ago.

PLDT shares, however, fell in late morning trade yesterday after it announced earnings that were below many analysts' expectations.

Analysts said they had been looking for a stronger bottom line from the country's dominant telecom firm in the wake of an improved performance from its cellular unit, Smart Communications Inc.

Last year PLDT absorbed heavy losses from Smart as it engaged in a technology spending program to upgrade the network.

In a statement, PLDT said Smart and Piltel added 821,000 new subscribers for their global system for mobile communications (GSM) for the first three months of the year, bringing the total number of GSM subscribers of the PLDT group to 3.52 million.

Including analogue subscribers, the total is already 4.24 million subscribers, outnumbering the group's fixed line subscribers by a ratio of more than two to one.

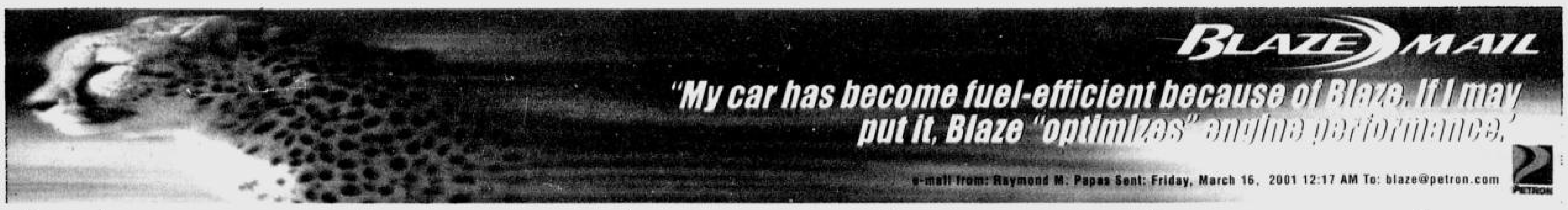
Smart's net income reached P837.3 million, up from a net loss of P966.2 million for the same period in 2000.

However, Piltel recorded a net loss of P1.4 billion in the first three months of the year as a result of depreciation costs and marketing expenses for its GSM service.

PLDT's consolidated revenues increased to P18.04 billion from P14.38 billion in the first quarter of last year, though revenues for PLDT alone increased by only P925 million from P10.7 billion to P11.62 billion in the same period.

Revenues from international long distance also declined by P150.5 million to P3.2 billion despite the increase in call volumes by 44.9 percent compared to the first quarter of last year. This was a result of declining international long distance rates.

There was also a decrease in revenues from national long distance by P690.2 million or by 23.3 percent to P2.3 billion as call volumes decreased by 9.3 percent from 810.7 million billed minutes to 734.9 million billed minutes.



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e-mail from: Raymond M. Papas Sent: Friday, March 16, 2001 12:17 AM To: blaze@petron.com
PETRON

Urban loan transfers: ₱4-B bailout or sellout?

BY RAUL C. DANCEL

(Third of a series)

WITHIN the financial community, there is such a thing known as a "Chinese wall." It's not a physical structure. It's more like an imaginary boundary that separates a financial firm's departments to,restrict access to non-public, material information to avoid the illegal use of inside information. It is also used to define limits to transactions a bank can engage in with its own investment house and with other corporations.

SPECIAL REPORT

Government regulators believe that when it bailed out its investment house by buying "garbage" loans and receivables, Urban Bank breached this wall and should be held accountable for it. The bank's former president, who is now facing charges of massive fraud and economic sabotage, insists that in the real world, it isn't that simple.

BARTOLOME

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Rafael Buenaventura said Urbancorp Investments Inc. was running itself to the ground, and that Urban Bank should have just let fate take its course. Urban Bank should have let Urbancorp die because it was bleeding from its own wounds, anyway. "Had it allowed Urbancorp to close down and just restructure the investments it had, Urban Bank would not be closed today," he said.

Urban Bank's ex-president, Teodoro Borlongan, disagrees He said Urban Bank and Urbancorp were relying on the same lifeline, and that it was impossible to isolate the wound. He said Urbancorp, had it been allowed to fail, would take Urban Bank down with it.

No bailout required

Buenaventura stressed that Urban Bank did not have any responsibility to Urbancorp's investors because these people were aware of the risks involved.

"Had Urbancorp told its investors to wait until their placements become due and that it would not allow them to preterminate, Urban Bank depositors could have survived because the total deposits of Urban Bank were less than P7 billion, and they were able to generate P4.6 billion of cash, which they gave to Urban Investments. That's what I was saying, why did they favor Urbancorp investors at the expense of Urban Bank who had the ability to generate cash?" he said.

"For the people who had Urban Bank deposits, which is the responsibility of the central bank, at least P4.6 billion could have been made to meet their deposits What we're telling them is had they not done the transfer, they generated P4.6 billion in deposits, and that could have met Urban Bank depositors' requirement. Let's just say *na talagang naubos ang pera*, then it would have been only P2 billion out of the P6 billion *ang naipit na lang sa* Urban Bank. *Yung sa* Urban Investments, it's an investment, it is not secured by PDIC, it is not supervised by the BSP. They bought loans, and if the loans went bad, sorry *ka na lang*," Buenaventura said.

An illegal act

The central bank governor conceded that had Urbancorp shut down, Urban Bank would suffer a run, "but Urban Bank had the money. It had the ability to borrow P4.6 billion."

"What we're saying is that had they not transferred the bad assets, they would have had enough cash, plus an emergency loan from us, to cover all their deposits and maybe the withdrawals would have stopped. Urbancorp's problems were a different set of problems, that's why they had a different set of officers. That, in a nutshell, is what it's all about," Buenaventura said.

He added that the very act itself was illegal because Urban Bank and Urbancorp were supposed to be two different corporations.

"The investment house has no quasi-banking license. If you don't have a quasi-banking license, you are not allowed to sell (the receivables), plain and simple," Buenaventura said.

He added that Urbancorp could not sell impaired assets for 100 percent of their value and also cover for the interest, like Puerto Azul Land Inc.

"So in that sense, that's where we'll hit them for estafa because they prejudiced Urban depositors when they gave cash to Urban Investments in order to allow Urban Investments investors to get out when their contracts clearly stated that they were taking a risk in those investments. Forget this question of

URBAN/ B5

Ford seeks lower duty for Aico plan

BY GIL C. CABACUNGAN JR.

AMERICAN car giant Ford Motor Co. is proposing a multimillion-dollar regional production swapping agreement between its Thailand and Philippine subsidiaries and is asking Bangkok and Manila for preferred duties under the Asean Industrial Cooperation (Aico) agreement.

Ford, through Ford Motor Co. Philippines Inc., is planning to assemble the Escape sport utility vehicle and the Laser/Lynx/Mazda 323 sedan at its Sta. Rosa plant for export to Thailand and Indonesia

In exchange, Ford's Thai subsidiary, Auto Alliance Co. Ltd. (where Ford has a 48-percent interest and Mazda Motors of Japan has 45 percent), would ship Ranger pickup trucks and Volvo sedans to the Philippines.

Ford is seeking to carry out the two-way trade between its Thailand and Philippine subsidiaries at preferred duties of between 0 and 5 percent or a steep discount over the prevailing duties on completely built up units of at least 30 percent.

No details were given on the projected volume of trade between the two Ford subsidiaries and whether this project is tied up with Ford Philippines' pending application with Malacañang to bring in 2,000 Escape units without the tires and batteries at preferred duties.

Ford abandoned both its Thailand and Philippine operations in 1976 and 1984, respectively, but came back with a bang in the 1990s with $500 million investments in Thailand and $150 million in the Philippines.

Ford's Thailand plant is its biggest factory for pickup trucks outside the United States with an annual capacity of 100,000 units. In contrast, the Sta. Rosa plant has a capacity of 25,000 units a year.

With Ford and General Motors' massive capital infusion, Thailand has been widely seen as Asia's Detroit considering that it is now Asia's third largest vehicle exporter behind Japan and South Korea. Thailand is also the world's second largest market for pickup trucks next only to the United States.

The project has to be mutually agreed upon by the concerned governments and Ford is reportedly facing stiff resistance from industry players in Thailand. The Philippines, however, is taking a serious look at Ford's offer because it would allow the country to boost its automotive exports to between 10,300 units and 19,800 units from 2002 to 2004.

Among Asean's four key members, the Philippines has the smallest automotive export of 94 units in 2000 compared to Thailand's 141,436 units; Indonesia's 47,001 units; and Malaysia's 12,600 units.

Aico is the latest version of the region's industrial cooperation program which began with the Asean Industrial Joint Venture and Brand-to-Brand Complementation scheme in the late 1980s. The program is geared toward allowing multinational corporations to enjoy preferred duties on inter-regional trade of their products well ahead of the Asean Free Trade Area in 2003.

Petron posted ₱348M in profit in 1st quarter

PETRON Corp. yesterday reported a net income of P348 million for the first quarter of the year, a turnaround from a net loss of P331 million in the same period last year.

The company's net loss last year reached P1 billion.

Petron attributed its recovery to "improved margins resulting from lower crude prices and a more stable peso-dollar exchange rate."

Petron said its gross margin in the first three months went up to 10.3 percent from 3.3 percent in the same period last year.

It said that its year-on-year sales volume for the first quarter declined by 4.3 percent. This and a "slight loss of market share relative to other local refiners" translated to a 10.7-percent drop in sales revenues.

Earlier, the Philippine Institute of Petroleum said Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp. has dislodged Petron as the No. 1 oil refiner in the country.

The PIP said that Shell has taken the lead in sales with 38.3 percent of the market against Petron's 37 percent.

In the same period last year, Petron led the industry with a market share of 39.2 percent compared to Shell's 36 percent.

A Shell official said the company was due to "aggressive marketing and structural cost reduction."

Petron officials said losing ground after the first quarter was not unusual.

Petron corporate communications manager Virginia A. Ruivivar said it was not a situation that Petron was expecting to remain in the long run.

Ruivivar said Petron deliberately gave up some of its domestic accounts as it concentrated on exports, which gave the company healthier margins.

Petron chair Jose A. Syjuco said the loss of a small share of the domestic market was part of a deliberate strategy to penetrate the export market.

Syjuco added that export sales insulate at least part of the company's revenues from fluctuations in the peso-dollar exchange rate.

"As margins normalize in the local market, we are confident that, given our inherent advantage in terms of refining capacity and distribution network, we will regain the top market position," Syjuco said.

Ruivivar said Petron still has the biggest refining capacity at 180,000 barrels per day. *Ronnel W. Domingo*

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3 firms offer to handle PNB's bad loans

BY CLARISSA S. BATINO

AT LEAST three investment banks have offered to take out the bad loans of Philippine National Bank worth P40 billion and dispose of the non-performing loans through an asset management company.

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Deputy Governor Alberto Reyes said the three investment banks have offered to put up an asset management company to handle the disposal of the bank's NPLs which stood at 40 percent of total loan portfolio in the first quarter.

Reyes refused to reveal the names of the investment banks but confirmed that three foreign groups had made separate offers to PNB.

Sources, however, believed that these groups were the same ones that had offered to handle the NPLs of the entire banking industry namely, JP Morgan, Morgan Stanley and Lehman Bros.

The asset management company was proposed by banks supposedly to handle the bad loans of the commercial banking sector which stood at P245.4 billion last year.

The plan was to clean the banking sector's balance sheet by transferring the bad loans to the AMC which, in turn, would sell the NPLs and the assets backing these loans.

The BSP official explained that an asset management company would take out the NPLs, handle the collection at a discount, and dispose of the foreclosed assets or the real and other properties owned and acquired or Ropoa.

PNB, the country's sixth largest bank, is saddled with the second highest NPL level in the industry. Its Ropoa also doubled to P22 billion in the first quarter.

Reyes said the BSP was set to impose rules on how long and how much foreclosed assets the banks could keep in their books.

He said the central bank would propose to the Monetary Board in the next two weeks stricter rules to govern Ropoa. "We are doing these because banks are not taking any concrete step to take out their Ropoa from their books," said Reyes.

In February, the level of foreclosed assets of banks have increased to 4.4 percent or P130.8 billion from the previous month's P130 billion. The trend, much like the ratio of nonperforming loan, appears to be increasing.

COUNTRY SHARES
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	BUYING	SELLING
ALABANG COUNTRY CLUB A/B*	1,950,000/2.0M	2.0M/2,150,000
BAGUIO COUNTRY CLUB	800,000	850,000
CAPITOL HILLS GOLF CLUB	115,000	
CELEBRITY SPORTS	210,000	215,000
CLUB FILIPINO		350,000
EAGLE RIDGE A/B*/C**	450,000	500,000*/700,000**
FOREST HILLS A/B*/C**	280,000	290,000/350,000*/450,000**
MAKATI SPORTS A/B*	400,000/450,000*	405,000/500,000*
MANILA POLO CLUB	3,500,000	4,000,000
MANILA SOUTHWOODS A/B*	825,000/950,000	850,000/1,000,000*
ORCHARD A/B*/C**	280,000/600,000**	330,000/425,000*
PUERTO AZUL A/B*	130,000	150,000/% cal*
QUEZON CITY SPORTS	225,000	230,000
RIVIERA GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB A/B*	250,000	280,000/420,000*
TAGAYTAY H-LANDS COUNTRY CLUB	480,000/1,100,000*	485,000/1,250,000*
TAGAYTAY MIDLANDS	850,000	875,000
VALLEY GOLF	330,000	350,000
VALLE VERDE	185,000	195,000
WACK WACK	10,395,000	10,870,000

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Meralco RORB drops to 4.9% due to delays in rate hike

BY RONNEL W. DOMINGO

MANILA Electric Co.'s return on rate base, a measure of the company's profitability, has slipped to 4.9 percent from 5.5 percent in 2000, investment house Lehman Brothers said in a review of Asian utilities' performance.

Lehman Brothers traced the sliding RORB to the delays in the approval of Meralco's application for a rate increase.

Meralco filed a petition for a 30-centavo per kilowatt-hour increase in its rate before the Energy Regulatory Board in April 2000.

However, the ERB has yet to decide on the matter due to the strong opposition from the Office of the Solicitor General and consumer groups such as the National Association of Electricity Consumers for Reforms.

The OSG is questioning Meralco's computation of its return on rate base. It argued that the issues concerning Meralco's petition had been raised and have been pending with the Supreme Court.

For its part, Meralco said it had to raise its rates to meet the minimum 8-percent RORB level that was set by its creditors.

In its first quarter report, Meralco also attributed to this issue the 48.4-percent drop in its net income during the period.

Meralco said it chalked up a net income of P394.4 million in the first three months of the year, which was way below the P764.1 million registered in the same period last year.

Moreover, the Lopez firm earlier said it was forced to decrease its five-year capital expenditure program because of the delays in the approval of its rate hike petition.

The firm said it had planned to allocate P11.4 billion this year, but it might be able to spend only P8.2 billion.

The Lehman Brothers' review said that Meralco's capex would even be lower at P6.5 billion as programmed for the year. To date, Meralco has spent only P1.86 billion, it added.

ICTSI amenable to delisting

BY ELENA R. TORRIJOS

PORT operator International Container Terminal Services Inc. is amenable to the possibility of delisting its shares at the Philippine Stock Exchange as it plans to list its international holding unit overseas by 2003.

In an investors' briefing held yesterday at the Westin Philippine Plaza, ICTSI chair Enrique Razon reaffirmed the company's plan to list part of ICTSI International Holdings Corp., which is 61-percent-owned by ICTSI.

However, Razon said, "I feel that there should be only one listed company so we'll have to see how to structure that."

"There's really no advantage to being listed here now," he pointed out.

Earlier, Razon had said that ICTSI might also sell part of its stake in IIHC through private placements or to JP Morgan and Capital International. These investment firms own 29 percent of IIHC and are holding the right of first refusal over ICTSI's stake in IIHC.

Razon also disclosed that in two months, ICTSI was expected to come out with a decision on how to go about refinancing its outstanding convertible debts, $130 million of which will fall due in March next year.

GOINGS-ON

New LPG loading facility

SHELL Gas Eastern Inc., an LPG logistics joint venture between Shell Petroleum and Total Petroleum Philippines Corp., inaugurates two new loading facilities constructed at a cost of P119 million in its LPG storage terminal near the coastal town of Tabangao in Batangas.

The new loading facilities, which were commissioned by SGEI last January, expand the current LPG dispatch capability of both Shell and Total in the Philippines to better and more efficiently serve their respective LPG markets. To mark the milestone, Total Petroleum is hosting inauguration rites on May 8, 2001 at the SGEI compound.

The Shell-Total joint venture is in support of the Philippine downstream oil deregulation law, a landmark legislation that encourages the entry of new players in the oil industry.

Globe uses Lucent system

LUCENT Technologies today announced that Globe Telecommunications, the second largest communications service provider in the Philippines, signed a contract to deploy the Lucent NetMinder System Network Trouble Patterning (NTP) software as part of Globe's continuing program to improve customer service and upgrade network performance. Deployment was completed end of April.

With Lucent's software, Globe Telecom expects to maximize revenues and optimize call traffic through its existing international gateway and toll switches. This use of Lucent's network performance management solution is expected to result in increased revenues from international calls due to higher rates of call completion, from avoidance of network congestion and from overall improvement of network performance.

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EEI, RCBC eye property venture

BY DORIS C. DUMLAO

THE YUCHENGCO group of companies, through construction and real estate arm EEI Corp. and Rizal Commercial Banking Corp., is pursuing a new 24-hectare middle-income residential property development in Trece Martirez, Cavite.

In a report during yesterday's stockholders' meeting, EEI chair and CEO Rizalino Navarro said the construction sector was still not expected to stage a robust rebound this year.

"Opportunities, however, lie in selective markets, including electronics, regional roads and infrastructure, health and educational institutions and possibly food and beverages, which EEI will tap to the best of its ability," Navarro said.

Amid the weak environment, EEI and its eight subsidiaries posted a net profit of P6 million in the first quarter of the year, down from P35 million in the same period last year. "We're lower than last year. We're just trying to keep our heads above water but at least we've still managed to keep ourselves in the black," Navarro said, noting that the company would be happy just to break even for the full year.

Meanwhile, EEI president and COO Samzon Lazo reported to stockholders that the real estate development tie-up with banking affiliate RCBC was among the projects lined up by the group's real estate subsidiary EEI Realty Corp. He said this was the group's options on how to optimize the land bank assets of RCBC.

"A 24-hectare foreclosed property directly adjacent to the Grosvenor Place is Trece Martirez, Cavite, is now the subject of negotiation for a joint undertaking with RCBC. A list of in-city properties offered by private individuals for joint development is currently being reviewed and evaluated," Lazo said.

"The resurgence of the middle-income market with the advent of a new political climate should be a welcome development for the property market in general and EEI Realty in particular," he said.

Grosvenor Place is also EEI Realty's joint venture with Robinsons Homes Inc. and was launched in June last year.

On the international front, Navarro also said the company would strengthen its marketing presence by establishing representative offices and developing partnerships with reputable local and construction companies.

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Philippine Stock Exchange

(As of Tuesday, May 8, 2001)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	5.5	5.6	5.5	5.6	14,000
Banco Filipino Sav & Mort	100	100	100	100	100
Bank of the Phil. Islands	76.5	77.5	76.5	77	872,300
Chinatrust Comm. Bank	18.25	18.25	18.25	18.25	8,205,100
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	43	43	42.5	42.5	2,100
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	209	210	205	207	103,650
Philippine National Bank	45	45.5	45	45.5	9,300
Security Bank Corp.	18.5	19.25	18.5	19.25	13,500
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Filipino Fund Inc	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	20,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1270	1270	1260	1260	1,930
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1050	1075	1050	1070	29,970
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.45	0.45	0.44	0.44	260,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	3.4	3.4	3.1	3.1	30,000
Philstar.Com Inc.	1	1	1	1	7,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	700	700	675	685	126,240
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.043	0.045	0.042	0.043	92,600,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	41	41.5	41	41.5	41,700
Manila Electric Co. B	54.5	56	54.5	55	1,275,200
Petron Corp.	1.7	1.74	1.66	1.66	8,862,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.16	1.16	1.16	1.16	323,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	1.38	1.38	1.34	1.36	1,411,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	50,000
Union Cement Corp.	1.08	1.1	1.08	1.1	534,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.08	2.08	2.08	2.08	12,000
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	43,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	13.25	13.25	13	13	428,300
La Tondena Distillers Inc.	29.5	30	29.5	30	7,700
RFM Corp.	0.94	0.94	0.93	0.93	1,590,000
San Miguel Corp. A	45.5	45.5	45	45.5	44,400
San Miguel Corp. B	49	50.5	49	50	460,900
Vitarich Corp.	0.49	0.5	0.49	0.5	110,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	20,000
Ayala Corp.	7.6	7.7	7.6	7.7	198,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	1.24	1.24	1.24	1.24	72,000
Alliance Global Group Inc.	12.25	12.5	12	12.25	1,300
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.76	0.76	0.76	0.76	100,000
A. Soriano Corp.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	120,000
Apc Group Inc.	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	100,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.006	10,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.58	0.58	0.58	0.58	100,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.46	1.48	1.44	1.44	2,036,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	50,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.16	0.16	0.15	0.15	300,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.41	0.41	0.41	0.41	1,050,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.04	400,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	24	24	23.75	23.75	8,100
Global Equities Inc.	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	20,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.88	1.88	1.88	1.88	2,947,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.77	0.77	0.77	0.77	340,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.48	0.48	0.48	0.48	220,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.57	0.57	0.5	0.5	1,260,000
Unioil Res. & Holdings Co.	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.07	100,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	360,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.44	0.46	0.44	0.46	60,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.26	0.27	0.26	0.27	400,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Interphil Labs Inc. B	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	131,000
Music Corp.	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	102,000
Picop Resources, Inc.	0.085	0.085	0.085	0.085	100,000
Central Azucar Don Pedro	0.91	0.91	0.9	0.9	300,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	15	15.25	15	15.25	134,300
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.48	0.48	0.48	0.48	290,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.49	0.49	0.48	0.49	1,730,000
Manila Jockey Club	20	20	20	20	500
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)		40	40	39.5	39.5
318,000					
Globe Telecom Hldg (Pdr)	700	700	700	700	3,100
Jollibee Warrants	13	13	13	13	8,000
Omico Corp. Warrant	0.0026	0.0026	0.0026	0.0026	
119,000,000					
Philweb.Com Inc. -Warrants		0.035	0.038	0.033	0.036
61,300,000					
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	5.5	5.6	5.5	5.5	1,960,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	370,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	1,810,000
Edsa Prop. Holdings Inc.	1	1	1	1	19,000,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	2.14	2.14	2.08	2.08	4,557,000
SM Development Corp.	0.86	0.86	0.85	0.85	80,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.8	6.9	6.8	6.9	962,000
Universal Rightfield Prop	0.095	0.095	0.09	0.09	1,400,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.006	2,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.0038	0.0038	0.0038	0.0038	10,000,000
Polar Mines & Dev't Corp.	0.014	0.015	0.014	0.015	3,500,000
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13	20,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.021	0.021	0.021	0.021	1,100,000
Interport Res.	0.0042	0.0042	0.004	0.004	14,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	7,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	450,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	150,000
Pacifica	0.017	0.017	0.017	0.017	7,000,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.085	0.085	0.085	0.085	100,000

	SHARES	VALUE (P)
Banks & Fin Svc	9,271,950	273,646,605.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	311,895,740	246,283,200.00
PRO	30,139,000	46,961,040.00
Mining	15,520,000	104,100.00
OIL	29,800,000	345,900.00
GRAND TOTALS :	396,626,690	567,340,845.00

AVERAGES		
Banks & Fin Svc	603.47	UP 0.08
Comm'l & Ind'l	1,954.83	DOWN 4.25
PRO	564.47	DOWN 1.57
Mining	1,153.73	UNCH 0.00
OIL	1.49	DOWN 0.03
All Shares Index	751.76	UP 2.30
Composite	1,427.28	DOWN 4.63

NO. OF ADVANCES: 25; NO. OF DECLINES: 30; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 32; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 87; NO. OF TRADES: 1,967

DISCLOSURES

PURE Foods Corp. declared property dividends consisting of 100 percent of the company's shareholdings in its three wholly owned subsidiaries to all stockholders of record as of May 21 and payable within 60 days from the record date.

* * *

PNOC Exploration Corp. denied reports it will definitely infuse additional $40 million into the Malampaya natural gas project this year. Also, the company will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on June 13, 9 a.m. at the canteen of Building 5, Energy Center in Fort Bonifacio, Taguig. Stockholders of record as of June 1 will be entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

* * *

PHILTREAD Holdings Corp. announced the resignation of Gary Crigger as director of the company. Elected to replace him was Stuart Hess.

* * *

RIZAL Commercial Banking Corp. disclosed the resignation of Kimisuke Fujimoto as member of the company's board.

* * *

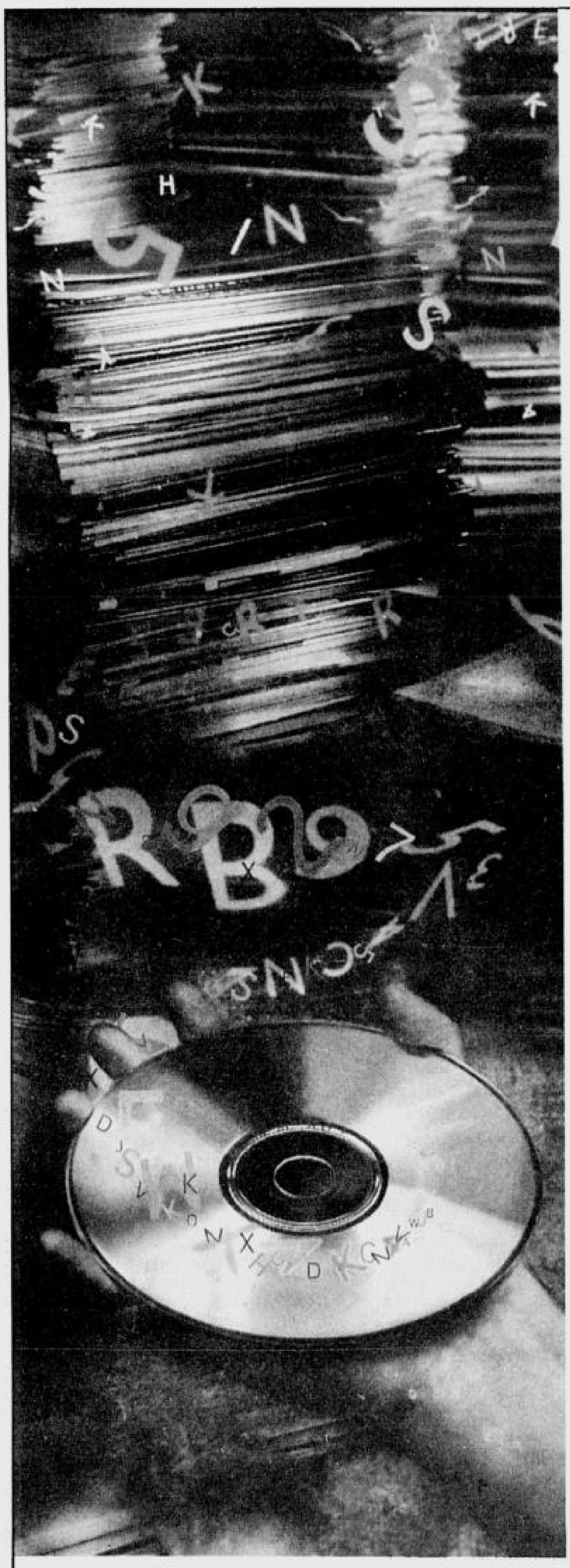
UNIVERSAL Robina Corp. declared a 10 percent stock dividend in favor of stockholders of record as of June 29 and shall be distributed on July 27.

* * *

ALLIANCE Global Group Inc. declared a P0.05 per share cash dividend in favor of stockholders as of June 5.

* * *

EEI Corp., engaged in industrial construction, said yesterday consolidated net income for January-March fell 82 percent to P6 million, versus the year ago period. EEI chair and CEO Rizalino Navarro told Reuters the company recorded P6 million in consolidated net income for the first quarter of the year compared to P33 million in the same period a year ago. Consolidated revenues totaled P1.1 billion for the first quarter.



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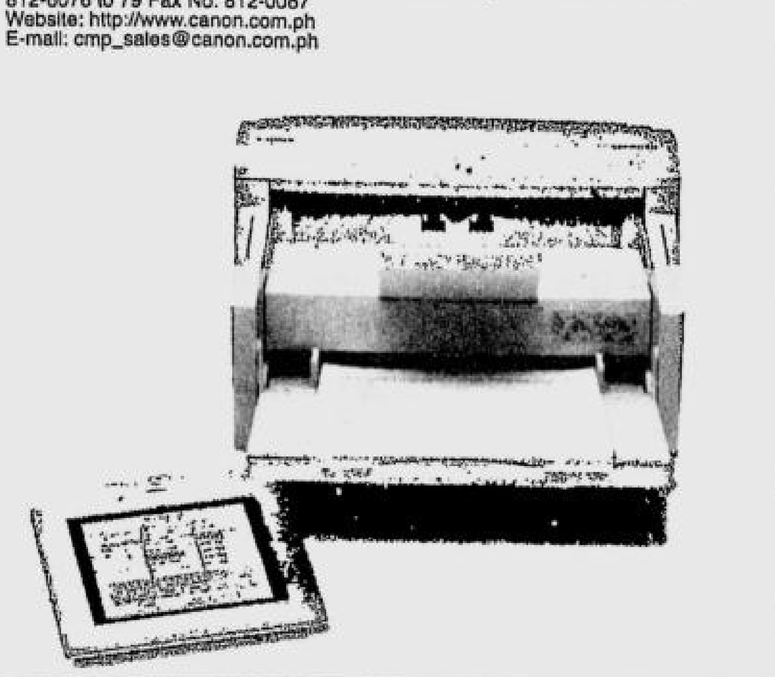

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Urban: Bailout or sellout?

(From page B2)

whether we closed them hastily or not. The fact remains that they transferred money from one set of corporations to another."

Also, there is the fact that some of the relatives and in-laws of Urban Bank chair Arsenio Bartolome III, Borlongan and some other bank officers managed to shovel some P193 million out of Urbancorp just days before Urban Bank went belly-up.

Documents filed in court showed that out of over P2.31 billion paid by Urbancorp to its investors from April 19 to 25, close to P40 million went to Bartolome's relatives and in-laws, among them Emiliana Bartolome, Mercedes Kimwell, Elizabeth Cristobal, Emmanuel Kimwell, Francisco Bartolome and Linda Bartolome.

At least three relatives of Borlongan, meanwhile, were able to pre-terminate their investments in Urbancorp Investment Inc. two days before Urban Bank went on a holiday in April last year.

Documents obtained by the INQUIRER showed that Borlongan's father-in-law, Eduardo Enriquez, was able to withdraw P50.8 million worth of investments in Urbancorp.

Enriquez's own company, Enriquez Security Services Inc., one of the country's biggest security agencies, was itself able to pre-terminate P6.4 million worth of placements in Urbancorp.

Borlongan's brother-in-law, Eduardo Enriquez Jr., was also able to pull his money out of Urbancorp before Urban Bank went belly-up. He was able to withdraw some P3.5 million out of Urbancorp.

Borlongan's wife, Dolores, pre-terminated some P1.6 million in investments.

All these withdrawals were made on April 24 last year, just two days before Urban Bank went on a holiday.

A ship listing

Borlongan said closing down Urbancorp was "the only other alternative, but that was not necessarily the better alternative."

"What would have happened had I closed the investment house? Urban Bank would have a run," he said, and it would be something that the bank, without sufficient help from the government, would never recover from.

Borlongan said BSP Deputy Governor Alberto Reyes himself, in his testimonies during a hearing of the House committee on good government, admitted that "no bank in the world could survive a run."

"The bottom line is that, as a manager, you're telling me I should've closed the investment house. If there was hope to keep it alive, I would have continued it," he said.

His analogy for Urban Bank's decision to buy P4.5 billion worth of loans and receivables from Urbancorp was a ship that was leaning on one side. He referred to these loans and receivables as "intermediation vehicles."

"The intermediation vehicles, if I will put it, are cargoes on a ship. I just moved the cargoes of the ship because the ship was listing," he said.

"The whole point is this: We're into financial intermediation," he said. "Even the central bank knows this because they even proposed, for a while, swap deposits. Do you know what swap deposits are? You accept peso placements, but you use your FCDU books, and we know FCDU books are supposed to be independent and separate. The thing is, I did these things. What's so peculiar? It has been done for the past six years? Suddenly, it's wrong. It was detrimental *daw*."

BSP knew

In one of his affidavits, Borlongan said there were at least three central bank rules that allowed Urbancorp to transfer loans and receivables to Urban Bank.

"Ever since the BSP promulgated these rules in 1993, loan transfers have been going on in the banking industry because these transactions merely provide another intermediation vehicle for banks," he said.

He said Urbancorp had been transferring loans and receivables to Urban Bank for six years and that the central bank's examiners were aware and had, in fact, examined these transactions and found them legal and aboveboard.

He also said Urban Bank's board were aware of these transactions and had regarded them as acceptable risks.

He did it, too

Borlongan said BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura himself transacted with his own trust department when he was still president of the Philippine Commercial International Bank.

PCIBank, he charged, also used its finance companies, offshore companies, stockbrokerage, investment house and, its trust department for various intermediation vehicles.

Buenaventura said Borlongan was way off the mark with this one.

"In the case of PCIBank, it was within the bank itself. It was a question of whether certain liabilities were subject to reserve requirements and whether we would be in deficiency, and we were penalized. So *wala yung* self-dealing. It was within the bank, so no transfer from one bank to another company. Even in the bank itself, there was no transfer from one department to another, simply an interpretation of what deposit liabilities were subject to reserves. We were penalized for reserves, so there's no such thing as self dealing, so I don't know why he keeps on arguing this.

"If I had done what they had done," he added, "you could be sure that the central bank would have filed an estafa case against me, too. Even if I did wrong, two wrongs did not make a right."

Buenaventura also stressed that he "did not prejudice my depositors."

In Urban Bank's case, he said, depositors were locked in. "At their expense, *nakalabas ang* Urban Investment investors. In other words, *ginamit mo ang pera ng* Urban Bank *para bayaran ang* liabilities *ng* Urban Investments. *Tama ba iyan*?"

On relatives and in-laws

On the issue of his relatives and in-laws getting out of Urbancorp, Borlongan said: "When people make judgment about people who withdrew, the first thing to consider is how much the person leave behind in the bank. Secondly, if we're saying relatives who withdrew, one should also find out the equally close relatives who were not able to withdraw."

He added that "one does not have control of other people's money. It's a different thing if one stole or took money that was not his and intended to personally benefit from it. What I find wrong is if the money was not his and he intended to make money from it."

Talking specifically about the withdrawals his wife made, Borlongan told the INQUIRER: "If you get the records, you'll find out that that P1.6 million was for each of my four kids. They were gifts from my father-in-law to my kids. But I will not say anything more except for this: My wife did not have the benefit of that P1.6 million because much more than that I used to help other people.

"People would pass judgment, but people would have to determine what kind of character I really have from the very start despite what was made to appear. I mentioned about equally close relatives. Again, maybe you should ask my brother why he and his mother-in-law were not able to withdraw. Maybe you should ask the widow of my brother. Also, what she thinks of my father-in-law withdrawing. I do not intend to justify to everyone. Most of my people don't know about the withdrawals, etc. They don't know about my reasons. I don't have to explain to everyone of them. I certainly would like to say a lot more, but again, I'd like to say them in court *na lang*. Half-stories are falsehoods."

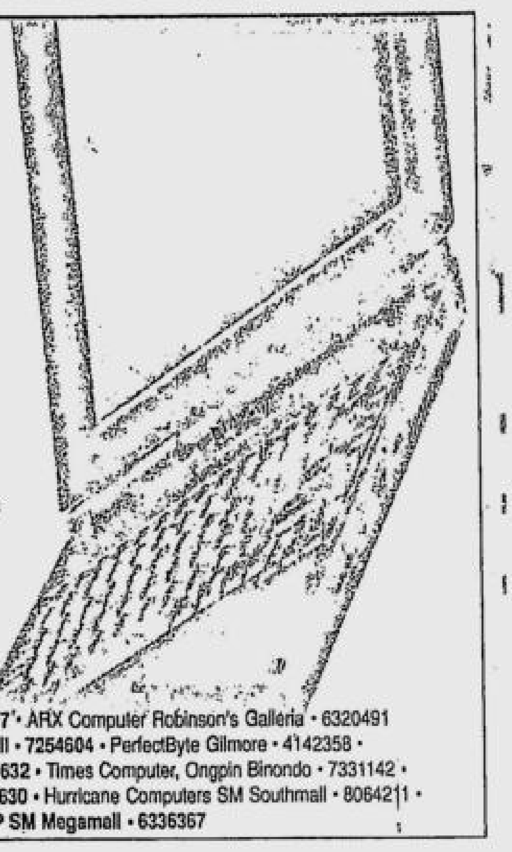
Emergency loan

Borlongan insists that the relationship between a bank and its investment house is clear even to government regulators.

He said during a meeting to discuss a bailout plan for Urban Bank on April 19 last year, the relationship between Urban Bank and Urbancorp "was clear" to BSP Deputy Governor Alberto Reyes and Monetary Board member Antonino Alindogan, "as they offered financial assistance of P3.5 billion, which they suggested would have to be coursed through a conduit so that the investment house may also be assisted."

This was why Borlongan could not understand why the central bank came hard on Urban Bank and cut its emergency loan to an amount so small that it became pointless to keep the bank's doors open.

(To be continued)



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LABOR TALKS

Asean job losses blamed on US slowdown

KUALA LUMPUR—Massive job losses could hit Southeast Asian countries as a result of the economic slowdown in the United States, government officials warned Tuesday.

Thousands of jobs have already been shed this year in the export-dependent region as the global slowdown begins to bite, particularly in countries such as Malaysia and Singapore, which rely on US demand for electronics components and products.

The economic downturn is at the top of the agenda for a meeting of labor ministers from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, plus Japan, South Korea and China, in Kuala Lumpur on Thursday and Friday.

Senior officials began meeting Tuesday to finalize details for the ministerial talks.

"The US economic issue is the main problem, that will be a starting point for the ministers to discuss," Bounnhou Phommavongsa, the deputy director general of Laos' labor ministry, said Tuesday.

Syed Muhamad Abdul Kadir, secretary general of Malaysia's human resources ministry, said urgent action was needed to curb layoffs which were the result of employers in export industries anticipating a reduction in demand.

"We must be productive to ensure that we do not face major difficulties," Syed Muhamad said. "The important thing is to take immediate action to curb massive retrenchments."

The nature of the action would be discussed by the ministers, he said.

In Malaysia, where US demand for electronics exports helped pull the economy out of recession brought on by the Asian financial crisis, official figures show that almost 3,500 workers lost their jobs in the first quarter of 2001. However, the official unemployment rate remains at less than 4 percent.

Bounnhou said the ministers would discuss how to fund various human resources and worker skills development projects which were agreed to at their last meeting in Manila.

He said Southeast Asian countries would seek funding from the richer Asian nations of China, Japan and South Korea, and that "we are hopeful that they will help us."

China, Japan and South Korea—which attend major Asean meetings as the so-called plus three countries—are scheduled to take part in the labor talks for the first time.

Another issue the ministers would discuss would be allegations of forced labor in Myanmar, also known as Burma.

Last year, the International Labor Organization recommended that its 175 member-states, employers, workers and international organizations review their dealings with Myanmar to make sure they are not abetting forced labor.

Syed Muhamad said the ministers would try to reach consensus on the issue before the ILO's next meeting in Geneva in June.

"As a regional grouping, Asean must have a common stand toward this country which is our close friend," Syed Muhamad said. "So when the topic is discussed in June, at least Asean will have some stand."

Asean has 10 members: Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. *AP*

Taiwan reduces next year's trade outlook

TAIPEI—Taiwan cut its 2001 trade forecasts on Tuesday for the second time in as many months after exports and imports posted double digit drops in April as trade with the United States, Europe and Japan all fell by over 10 percent.

Exports were now expected to fall 5 percent and imports 7 percent in 2001, which the government said reflected a worse than expected slowdown in domestic investment.

Exports in April fell 11.3 percent to $10.87 billion from the same month a year earlier, while imports dropped 13.5 percent to $10.51 billion, the Ministry of Finance said in a statement.

The larger decline in imports translated into a trade surplus of $356.2 million in April, up 258 percent from $100 million a year ago but still much smaller than what analysts had expected.

A Reuters poll forecast on average that April exports would fall 6.16 percent year on year to $11.499 billion, with imports down 15.15 percent to $10.313 billion, producing a surplus forecast of $1.186 billion.

March's exports were $11.74 billion with imports at $10.03 billion, leading to a trade surplus of $1.708 billion.

Last month, the Finance Ministry lowered the 2001 export forecast to a rise of 0.5 percent from the 4.2 percent forecast made by the state statistics agency, and said imports would be negative after the agency had forecast a 3.4-percent rise.

With a worsening US economy, exports to the United States, Taiwan's top export destination, fell 13.5 percent in April, while the value of products sold to Japan dropped 12 percent.

The US-led downturn has battered Taiwan's export-driven economy and dampened the island's appetite for raw materials, with imports from Japan plunging 30 percent in April.

Despite the disappointing data, Hsu Kuo-chung, director of the ministry's statistics department, told reporters the decline in exports was expected to ease after July when the island's mainstay electronics exports would enter its peak season.

Hsu also said there was a possibility exports would register actual on-year growth in November due to a low comparative base one year earlier when the global economy started to show signs of cooling. *Reuters*

China's central bank sees stable yuan

HONG KONG—China's currency would remain stable in 2001 as the economy was on track to meet Beijing's growth target of 7 percent, central bank governor Dai Xianglong said Tuesday.

The Chinese central banker told a business conference in Hong Kong that declining US interest rates would narrow the gap between the yuan and dollar rates, providing support for China's domestic currency.

China's yuan trades in a razor-thin band of 8.2770 to 8.2800 to the US dollar, though the central bank has allowed the yuan to occasionally stray outside the range as it moves toward more flexibility in its exchange rate policy.

"Real GDP is expected to grow by 7 percent in 2001, fixed asset investment by 10 percent and international trade volume by 8 percent," Dai said, reaffirming targets set at China's annual parliament meeting in March.

China's economy reversed a seven-year slowing streak by growing 8 percent in 2000, boosted by state spending and helped by strong exports and growing domestic consumption.

In the first quarter of 2001, China's GDP grew 8.1 percent year-on-year, faster than expected.

Government leaders have expressed concern that a slowdown in the global economy could dampen overseas sales this year.

Fixed asset investment grew 9.3 percent on-year in 2000 while exports rose 27.8 percent. *Reuters*

Peace hopes surround SE Asia's oil pipeline

SINGAPORE—Its supporters say it has the potential to bring peace and stability to Southeast Asia, but critics call it a pipe dream.

Over the next couple of decades, the state-owned oil companies of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations plan to link together thousands of kilometers of pipe—both underwater and on land—to form a massive natural gas pipeline.

Backers hope the project will be a major boost to Asean integration and eventually extend beyond Southeast Asia, possibly to China and India. While requiring a huge amount of coordination to build, the pipeline would ensure a constant supply of natural gas for the region.

But political unrest in Indonesia and border disputes between Thailand and Burma threaten to derail the grand vision, and no one knows if the pan-Asian pipeline will become a reality or remain in its current, fragmented state.

Much of the gas that will be tapped to feed the giant energy grid is in Indonesia, where separatist rebel activity threatens the economic viability of the project. On April 7, a grenade thrown by separatists exploded near a gas extraction installation in Lhoksukon, about 1,750 kilometers northwest of Jakarta, setting it on fire.

"Our own perception is that these political instabilities are just ripples," said Guillermo Balce, the head of the Asean Center for Energy in Indonesia. "The countries of Southeast Asia, politically, are in harmony because they have to be, especially at the economic level."

Asean countries Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Burma, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam have agreed to the project in principle.

But there is no set timetable for its completion, and estimates on its cost fluctuate between $15 billion and $30 billion.

About 2,540 kilometers of cross-border pipeline is already in place between Malaysia and Singapore, Burma and Thailand, and Indonesia and Singapore.

The first gas to travel through a $1.5-billion, 640-kilometer pipeline went from Indonesia to Singapore in January. Another pipeline from Indonesia to Singapore is under construction at a cost of $1.2 billion.

The exact length of an eventual trans-Asean pipeline is not known. And no one has estimated how much extra pipe—feeding off the main line—will be needed to service the domestic markets in each nation.

The current links, the beginning of the pipeline project, have evolved from bilateral agreements, said Dr. Mohd Farid Mohd Amin from Malaysia's state-owned Petronas Oil Co.

"The future challenge will involve multilateral arrangements" that are far more complicated because three or more nations have to agree, said Amin, who is in charge of implementing the Asean project.

Amin and others believe a coordinated and constant gas supply will greatly enhance security in Southeast Asia, but that there's a long way to go before the dream becomes a reality.

"It's good from a world peace point-of-view, but it needs to be economically viable," said John Vautrain, a US-based energy consultant, adding that such projects usually succeed only if private energy companies back them. So far, none has.

There is talk that the pipeline will reach into India and China but Amin said "the main priority is to try to get the gas to Asean nations first."

That might require a degree of political will that doesn't currently exist in Southeast Asia. *AP*

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Malaysia industrial output slows sharply

KUALA LUMPUR—Malaysia's index of industrial production slowed sharply in the first three months of 2001, dropping 7.2 percent versus the last quarter of the previous year, the Department of Statistics said on Tuesday.

The industrial production index edged 0.5 percent higher in March year-on-year, the lowest rise since early 1999, reflecting the abrupt economic slowdown in the United States.

The index rose 5.8 percent month-on-month.

Concerns about slack US demand, a key destination for Malaysia's exports, prompted the Malaysian government in March to cut its economic growth forecast to between 5 and 6 percent for 2001 from an earlier 7 percent.

The United States takes up more than one-fifth of the country's total exports.

Malaysia's manufacturing sector, which accounts for over a third of the economy, is expected to grow 8.5 percent during the year, down from 21 percent in 2000. *Reuters*

Fed: Economic impact of energy costs unclear

ATHENS, Ohio—The impact of higher energy costs varies across the United States and it is largely unclear how recent price rises will affect the US economy, Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland president Jerry Jordan said on Monday.

Jordan, speaking to reporters after addressing the local Rotary Club, said that since consumers can react to price changes in different ways, it is impossible to predict how the economy will be affected.

For instance, he said, some consumers might cut down on their driving, or they could switch from a sport-utility vehicle to a smaller car.

"They can spend less on something else, they can invest less if they have discretionary income," he added.

But he noted that energy costs are something that has a broad impact on consumers.

"Any relative price change has a differential impact," he said. "Energy is the one that tends to affect most people."

Jordan also noted that people in different regions seem to have different reactions, adding: "It's really very hard to generalize."

Earlier on Monday, the government said that despite a slowing economy and higher fuel prices, Americans would buy more gasoline at the pump than expected in the period through to September.

In its monthly energy outlook, the Energy Information Administration—the Energy Department's statistical agency—revised up gasoline demand in the current quarter by 100,000 barrels per day (bpd) to 8.61 million bpd, and also by 100,000 bpd in the third quarter to 8.78 million bpd.

Demand is expected to grow even though the EIA believes the national average gasoline price could hit a record $1.75 a gallon this summer, breaking the previous record of $1.68 rea *Reuters*

Singapore unions step up salary cut pressure

SINGAPORE—The Singapore union movement has ratcheted up the pressure on employers to accept its proposal to cut wages instead of jobs, as the global slowdown bites into the economy.

The National Trades Union Congress has issued an ultimatum demanding all companies build a "variable component" into salaries or risk losing union support for other cost saving measures, the Straits Times reported Tuesday.

Singapore's trade-driven economy is vulnerable to global developments such as the US-led economic slowdown, and the NTUC fears there could be more than 12,000 job retrenchments this year.

Since the city state emerged from the 1997 financial crisis, the union movement has been pushing employers to set aside part of wage increases as a variable component which can be cut to reduce costs and save jobs during an economic downturn.

"Employers have been dragging their feet and coming up with excuses. The message now has to be strong enough so companies will come on board," said NTUC president John de Payva.

At the end of last year, only 29 percent of employers in the unionized sector had adopted a flexible wage system.

NTUC secretary general Lim Boon Heng wants all companies to have a variable element built into wages within two years, but said there had to be framework so disputes were minimized. *AFP*

Microsoft strikes deal for software security

REDMOND, Washington—Microsoft Corp. has announced a deal to provide banks with software designed to make their Internet transactions ultra-secure.

The technology, which works in the Windows 2000 operating system, is designed to allow banks to be sure of whom they're dealing with on the Internet. It matches a security framework designed by Identrus, an alliance of 150 of the world's largest banks.

The deal announced Monday involves Microsoft, Unisys Corp. of Blue Bell, Pennsylvania, and the Ireland-based Baltimore Technologies, which has its US headquarters in Boston. Baltimore is providing its Public Key Infrastructure security system, and Unisys is providing help using the system.

Banks and businesses have long worried that insufficient Internet security could dampen Internet commerce. While Microsoft is not offering any new product, it and its partners are offering the ability to match Identrus' specifications with a single purchase.

Previously, communications between businesses could be performed over the Internet, but businesses often resorted to completing deals by overnight mail, said Bill Hartnett, Microsoft's global director of financial services.

This will allow banks to do things such as verify letters of credit by computer, he said. *AP*

3,000 TO 4,000 JOBS

Dell announces new layoffs

DALLAS—Dell Computer Corp., the world's largest PC manufacturer, says it will cut 3,000 to 4,000 jobs and force other employees to take unpaid time off as it struggles with weak demand for computer systems and services.

The Round Rock-based company said Monday the job cuts would occur over the next six months, and mostly in Central Texas. Monday's announcement comes on top of 1,700 layoffs that Dell announced in February and completed last month.

"Obviously, this means the business isn't getting better," said Daniel Niles, an analyst for Lehman Brothers. "They see it's going to be a rough couple of quarters, and they've got to get their cost structure in order."

Layoffs were once unheard of at Dell, as double-digit gains in PC sales made it a stock market phenomenon in the late 1990s. The company expanded its work force rapidly until late last year, but then PC sales flattened and haven't recovered.

"If the market drops off sharply and unexpectedly, you find yourself with something of an overhang in employment, and you have to adjust," said Dell spokesperson T.R. Reid.

Most of the layoffs will be in sales and marketing, engineering and other parts of the company in the Austin-Round Rock area, especially in management ranks and support services, Reid said.

Some manufacturing jobs also will be cut: The company said it would consolidate all notebook computer production at a plant near Nashville instead of dividing it between Tennessee and a plant in Central Texas.

Reid said "a small number" of employees have been told they will lose their jobs, but most layoff victims will be notified over the next six months.

Dell said it expects to take a one-time pretax charge of $250 million to $350 million against second-quarter earnings because of the job cuts and consolidation of facilities.

Dell also said it expects to meet its previously stated goals of $8 billion in revenue and 17 cents of earnings per share when it reports results for the first quarter on May 17. Dell said it remains "cautious" about the outlook for the rest of the year.

Several financial analysts had recently predicted another round of layoffs at Dell—the company cut 1,700 jobs in February.

Eric Rothdeutsch of Robertson Stephens, one of those who forecast the layoffs, said Dell was both responding to a slowing market and cutting costs so that it can continue to undercut competitors on price.

"Dell has the most effective operating structure of any PC maker. They're taking the opportunity during this downturn to take market share," Rothdeutsch said.

According to research firms that track PC sales, Dell has nearly one-fourth of the US market, almost double the figure for runner-up Compaq Computer Corp., which has also announced layoffs this year. Dell says the market-share figures are vindication for its business model of selling directly to consumers rather than through stores.

In the PC industry, as in other technology sectors, it's getting harder to find a company executive who will predict when the slump will end and sales will turn around. Niles, the Lehman Brothers analyst, said consumer confidence will erode further as corporate layoffs grow. *AP*

Japan's NTT to transfer half of work force

TOKYO—Telecommunications giant Nippon Telegraph and Telephone Corp. would shift more than half its work force to planned regional companies as part of cost-cutting plans, Japanese newspapers reported Tuesday.

NTT's main work force would be slashed from its current level of about 113,000 by approximately half through transferring around 60,000 workers under a three-year program, the nationally circulated Yomiuri newspaper said.

NTT spokesperson Isao Yoshikawa said management recently began discussing a restructuring program with the company's labor union. But he said details, including the number of workers to be transferred and estimated amounts of potential savings, had yet to be completed.

The company decided it needed to carry out bold restructuring to cut personnel costs and strengthen its competitiveness in Japan's fierce telecommunications market, the Yomiuri said.

The Mainichi, another mass-circulation daily, said NTT's management has already started consulting with the company labor union over the restructuring measures.

The plan also calls for a cut in salaries by 20 to 30 percent for those aged 51 or older who will be transferred to the yet-to-be established local companies, the reports said. *AP*

Japan's biggest make-up firm falls into the red

TOKYO—Japan's largest cosmetics firm Shiseido Co. Ltd. posted a net loss Tuesday of 45.1 billion yen ($75.8 million) for the year to March after the company incurred huge losses by bringing its pension liabilities into order.

Sales fell 0.2 percent to 595 billion yen from the same period a year earlier.

"Domestic sales (were) down 4.0 percent reflecting declines in both cosmetics and toiletries revenues," the company said in a statement.

Overseas sales for the world's fourth largest toiletries firm rose 21.5 percent in yen-based terms to 106 billion yen. Successful marketing of the Shiseido brand helped boost its popularity in foreign markets, the company said.

The company said its 45.1 billion yen net loss stemmed from "extraordinary losses, namely the complete elimination of the shortfall in its pension reserves associated with the introduction of retirement benefit accounting."

Shiseido plans to turn its attention to reversing the downward trend of sales in Japan.

"Amid an operating environment characterized by a deflationary economy and rapid structural changes in the domestic cosmetics market, our most urgent priority is the revitalization of our domestic cosmetics business," said Shiseido in a statement.

The company, which recently announced a management restructuring plan aimed at making operations more efficient, said the current fiscal year to March 2002 "will be a period for management reform."

It warned an upturn in profits will not happen in the short term.

"Domestic sales may not recover fully in the short term. In addition, we will face increased costs associated with investments required to implement such reforms." *AFP*

Unisys unveils system against check fraud

ORLANDO, Florida—Unisys Corp. has unveiled its Unisys e-@ction Payment Document Security Solutions, utilizing PayBOND, a unique patented technology from Payformance Corp. that protects information printed on corporate checks or other negotiable documents with a secure barcode.

According to the National Check Fraud Center, check fraud and counterfeiting are among the fastest growing problems affecting the nation's financial system, producing an estimated annual loss of $20 billion and continue to rise at an alarming rate.

With check fraud continuing to increase, potential check fraud losses are a major concern to the banking industry.

Banks face more fraud if their systems and procedures are not in check, forcing most banks to implement new solutions that address the problem of fraud at its origin.

Gary Wallen, vice president and general manager of Unisys Payment Systems, said: "With PayBOND, Unisys offers a way to verify that the courtesy and legal amounts haven't been altered. Because the PayBOND authentication process starts from the image of the check, it can be combined with any brand of item processing equipment, not just Unisys."

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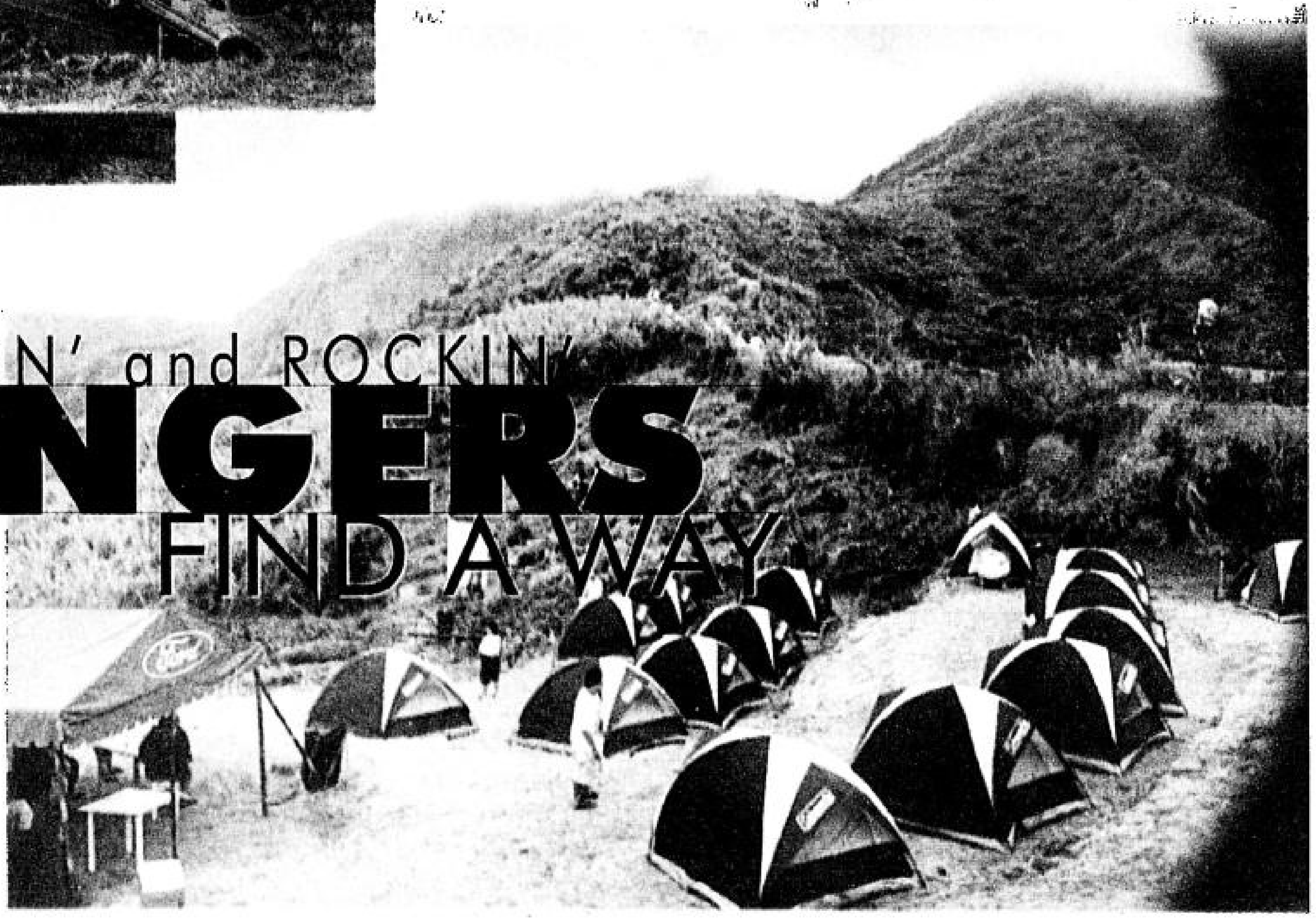
GETTING ready for next day's event, the participants were briefed on what to expect and let them drive through mock terrain to simulate off-road conditions.

Tough it Out
the Ford
Pinatubo Conquest

STAGE 2 April 28-29, 2001

ROLLIN' and ROCKIN' RANGERS FIND A WAY



ODD CAMPER OUT. Nestled at the foot of a misty Mt. Planaska, the camp lies just 4 km away from the crater rim of Mt. Pinatubo.

> The Ford Pinatubo Conquest opens our eyes to one of nature's wonders—what got left up there after Mt. Pinatubo erupted is something the Philippines should really be proud of

"ARE you ready to tough it out?" said the opening video during the briefing at Ford Pampanga the night before we headed out to Mt. Pinatubo. As a first time participant to this unique outdoor event, I wasn't quite sure what to expect when I heeded their invitation to join. Being a mountaineer, I was used to scaling heights on two sturdy legs.

Now, for a change, I would get to experience climbing a mountain on four wheels.

The Ford organizers must have read my mind when they led us afterwards to a mini-4x4 practice terrain field they built nearby. The ground was landscaped after the terrain we would encounter in the mountains, complete with bumps, steep slopes and narrow corners. Here, we drove the Ford Rangers for a practice run.

We were pampered the night before the grueling event. We were billeted in one of the villas in Mimosa and were treated to a hearty breakfast the next morning at the Bahay Kubo restaurant.

That was when and where all luxuries of a "level ground" screeched to a halt.

Six bright yellow Ranger SVT Pinatubo Edition 4x4 pick-ups greeted us. The way they looked—snorkeled and all—hinted at what lay ahead, and it wasn't going to be easy. The trucks' beds were filled with supplies we were going to need during the two-day activity. Just to be sure, I checked out the coolers (excellent, they were all filled with ice-cold soft drinks, Gatorade and bottled water). I checked the plastic containers, too, if the snacks were really there. I guess we were all packed and ready.

So off we went. The sky was clear, and the trail turned dusty and narrower approaching the foot of the Zambales mountain range. Rocks the size of small cars and claustrophobia-inducing cliff walls allowed only vehicles the width of a pick-up such as the Ranger to pass through. And where there weren't walls to enclose us, there were steep ravines surrounding the knife-edge ridge passes. A single mistake would cause a vehicle to fall off either side during crucial turns.

The 29.7-km. trail was carved out of hand—no bulldozers nor jackhammers were used. Hundreds of local Aetas were hired to clear the trail previously used to transport logs. As explained during the briefing by Faiz Sheik of Ford Group Philippines, no hardwoods were cut—only banana plants and tall grasses. Ford made sure the trail made minimum impact on the surrounding flora and fauna.

"A lot of people suggested that we just take a small bulldozer up there. We told them this was not just about creating a trail for our trucks. This was about making our customers see a new dimension in beauty to be seen up that trail. When you get up to the crater, I'm sure it would give you a new perspective of all the things that you do," explained Faiz.

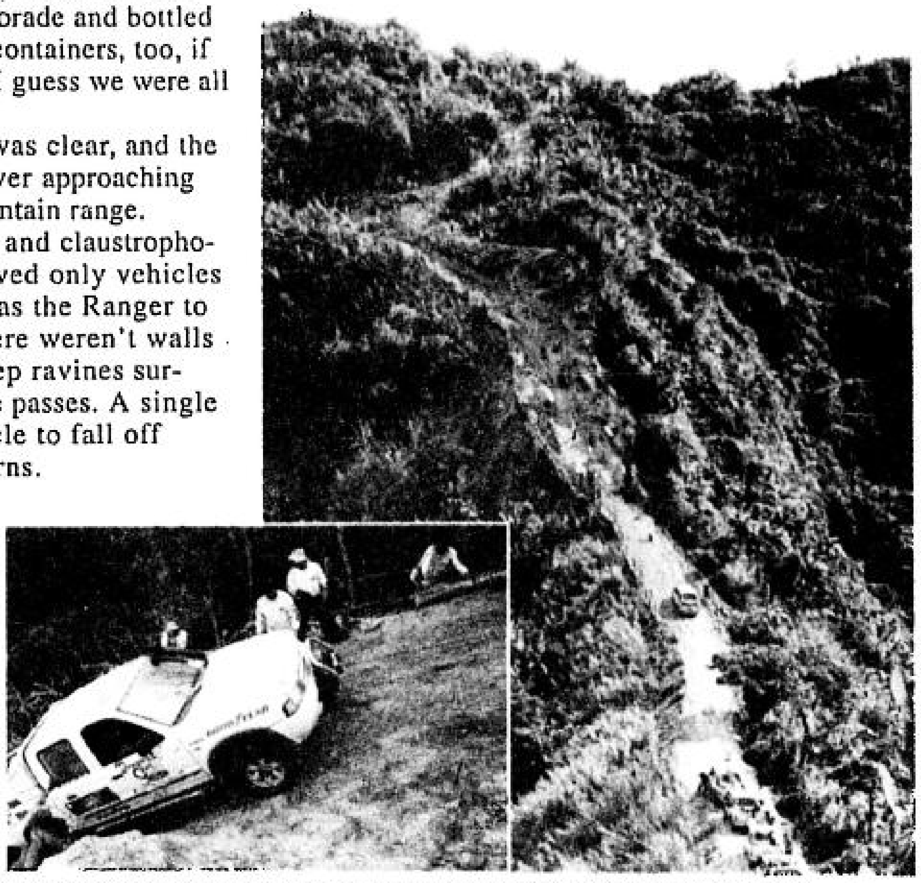
River crossings

There were several river crossings. Everywhere, there were sizeable boulders that put the Rangers' suspension and undercarriages on a workout. Though we were like riders on a pogo stick, the Ranger kept its composure over all those obstacles.

ROCK-A-BYE, BABY! Boulders on the riverbed make for a pretty nasty ride.

We were told that the rivers we crossed took on a more sinister character during the rainy months. In last year's initial run, the Ranger had to deal with the river's raging currents.

When we reached the foot of Elimination Hill, we were warned that this would be a series of uphill climbs with sharp turns. Braking was not an option. This part was too tricky, the Rangers had to do it one at a time. But after the last vehicle made it up we were all quite convinced of the Ranger's powerful 2.5-liter intercooler turbo diesel engine. That and the skillful drivers, of course.



WINCH OF CHANGE. Winches took over at the extremely steep inclines of Lightning Hill.

We reached the first campsite before noon, still 22.3 km to the crater. This was the farthest the previous year's Pinatubo Conquest had reached. Although this year's stage two was much tougher, the 12.7 km. stretch of the previous run was nevertheless rigorous since it was raining, which made the 2000 Conquest a slippery affair. "We had an even tougher time just getting up to here (Ford Campsite 1)," says one of the media participants who were able to join the first run.

Roller coaster ride

Venturing further out into the trail, we witnessed once more the power of the Ranger as we climbed several more dizzying inclines and maneuvered through steep drops, banana plantations and grassy valleys. It was a roller coaster ride we thought only a specially equipped pick-up like the Ranger could handle.

Mount Pinatubo was no ordinary mountain. But then, the Ranger was no ordinary vehicle.

We finally reached Lightning Hill, the ultimate obstacle for this stage. This was not your ordinary molehill. The incline was an intimidating 70 degrees, with deep ravines on both sides. Just to be sure we wouldn't lose lives and vehicles, we used winches to pull the trucks up, with the help of several locals in the area.

Pulling the Rangers uphill was made even more difficult with the loose earth that reduced the tires' traction to almost nil. Thanks to the extensive experience of the organizers and the tireless 'bayanihan' spirit on the part of the locals, four of the six Rangers made it uphill before nightfall.

By 6 p.m. we were all at the second campsite at the foot of Mt. Planaska, some 4 km. away from the crater rim of Mt. Pinatubo. We could have hiked the remaining distance to the crater, but night fast approached. Darkness would have only spoiled a breathtaking view of the crater lake.

It was a tiresome journey, yet we were all delighted for having made it this far—and on sturdy Rangers at that. Gathered around the bonfire, we let out a collective sigh of relief and raised a toast for a job well done. By midnight, the campfire chatter around us had slowly stilled. The quiet Pinatubo night was a welcome respite to the noisy grunts and groans of men and machines struggling to tame a mountain a few hours earlier.

The morning of the next day, we wanted to see the end of the unfinished trail, which would bring the Ranger ever so closer to the crater lake. But we were told it was a good one-hour trek on foot. I had loved to go, but we were running tight on the itinerary as we had to get back to Clark by nightfall. Nonetheless, the vista that lay before us was magnificent. I always thought Pinatubo—after spewing all that volcanic material—would be as barren white like the desert landscape I saw whenever I passed by the lahar-swollen rivers of Pampanga. On the contrary, everything here was green. I could just imagine how much more beautiful the lake hidden behind that crater wall was.

Like the Ford Rangers, life found a way in Pinatubo.

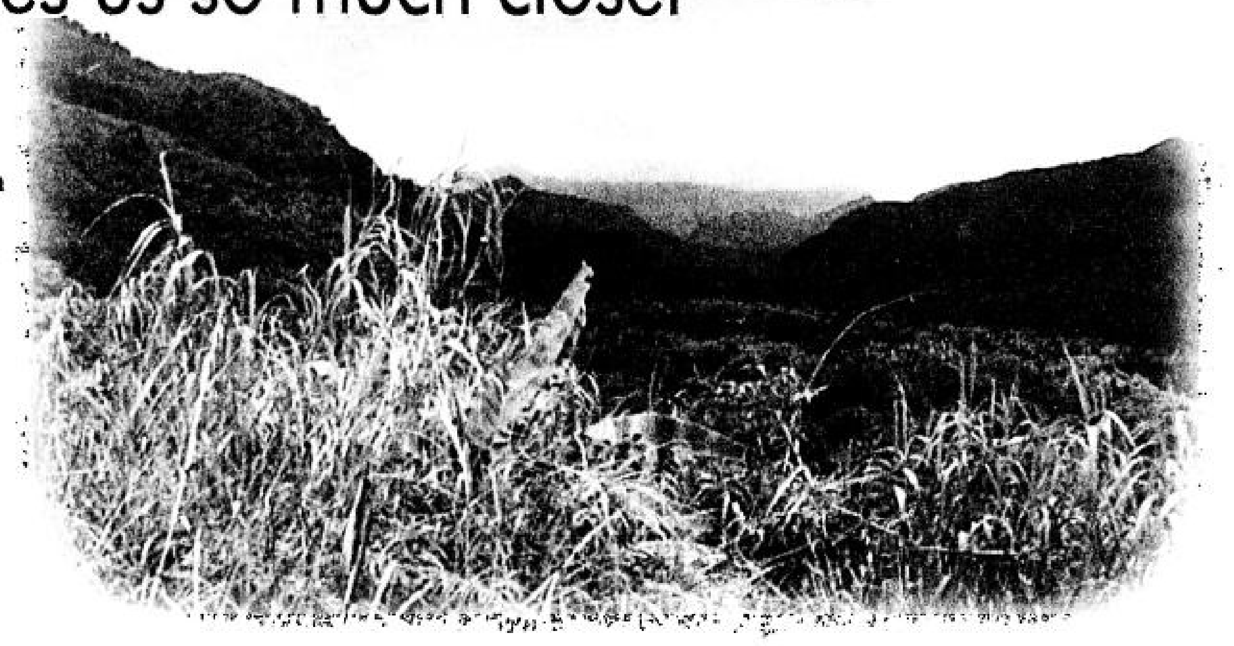
For now, only a 10-foot-high rock formation and another steep mountain slope keeps Ford from completing the trail. We were told using explosives was out of the question. The trail designers have decided to fill the entire boulder with sand. "Hopefully, before the year ends, we could finally reach the end of this trail in time for the third Pinatubo Conquest. It's just a matter of time," assures Dave Gutman, Ford VP for Marketing and Sales who joined us in the trip.

Time flies quickly. Before I know it, it will be stage three and I will finally get to see the crater lake. And then, after that, who knows. I might get to really understand that new perspective Faiz had been talking about so spiritedly.

THERE WILL BE A WAY... Nothing can stop Ford from completing the conquest. At right is the crater lake.

TEXT AND PHOTOS
BY CHARLES E. BUBAN

THE SEQUEL takes us so much closer



ON A COOL Saturday morning inside Holiday Inn Mimosa in Clark, Pampanga, the sun streams through century-old acacia trees. Some three dozen men and women stand alert, eyes focused on Faiz Sheik of Ford Group Philippines. Dressed in Ford Outfitters gear, just like the rest of the team, Faiz barks out the final instruction on this morning's commencement of the two-day Ford Pinatubo Conquest Stage 2.

Co-sponsored by Goodyear and Shell, the Ford Pinatubo Conquest was conceptualized as a unique off-road driving experience capitalizing on Mt. Pinatubo's breathtaking views. The uniqueness comes from traversing through the mountain's extremely rough terrain, cutting through 28 km. of jagged mountain ranges covered in thick vegetation and marked by rocks and cliffs.

Ford improves on its previous accomplishment. Last year, its Rangers went 14 km. into the trail. This time around the Ranger ventured 29.7 km., just 4 km. short of its goal to reach the foot of the crater rim. "This is a tremendous undertaking and it will take the efforts of so many people over a long period of time," explains Dave Gutman, Ford VP for marketing and sales.

This year's stage took us from Sacobia Valley in Clarkfield, Pampanga, where the trail started, through several river crossings, steep uphill climbs and sudden drops and finally winding up at the second Ford campsite at the foot of Mt. Planaska, one of several mountains leading to Mt. Pinatubo's crater.

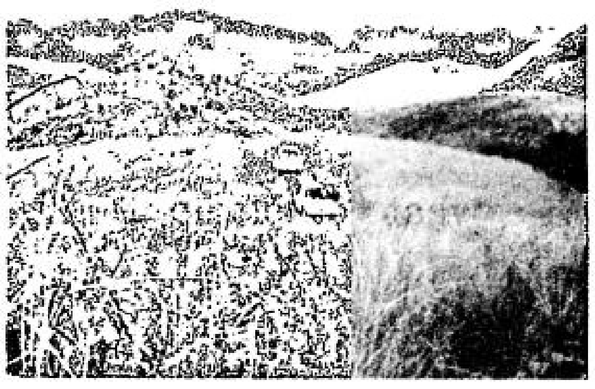
"There will definitely be a stage three, and that then will become the final route which Ford will hope to traverse every month that it does not rain. Considering how steep the slopes are, it would be dangerous to pass by this trail during rainy months. It's going to be a unique and touching experience," says Faiz Sheik.

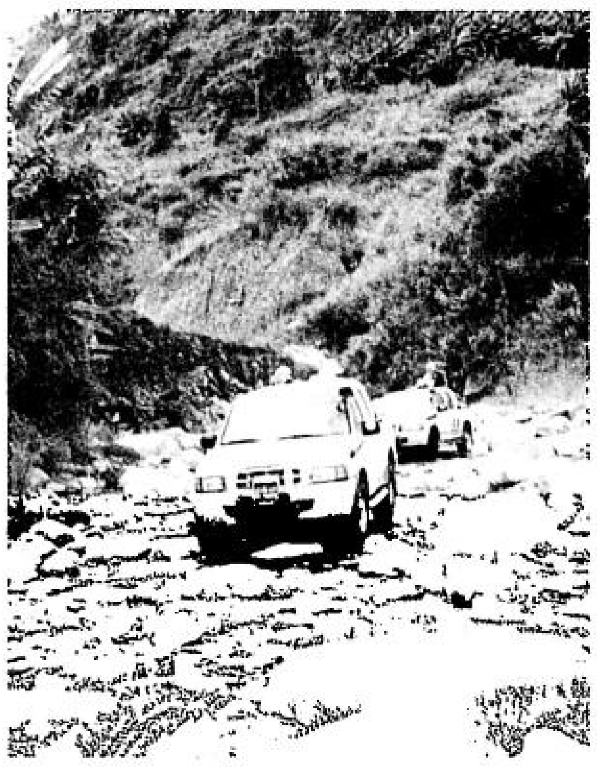
Thanks to the initiatives of Off-Road Ware Trading and Tours, the dream will finally be realized by the end of this year. The ORW is a Pampanga-based company comprised of members of the Angeles City Four Wheelers Club who partnered with Ford to create an off-road trail leading to Mt. Pinatubo as its ultimate destination.

"I personally have traveled to a lot of places in the world and I know the others have, too, and this is just about as good as it gets in terms of vast beauty. What got left up there after the volcano erupted and has formed over the years is something this country should be really proud of," says Gutman.

The Ford Pinatubo Conquest is indeed for adventure seekers and nature lovers. As participants pit their 4x4 driving skills against the challenges of the trail, they will also develop an appreciation to preserve an environment that has given so much natural thrills and challenges.

> Last year, the Rangers went in 14 km. into the trail. This time around the Rangers ventured 29.7 km., just 4 km. short of its goal to reach the foot of the crater rim





THROUGH HELL OR HIGH WATER, whatever the destination is, the Ford Rangers will get you there. Just don't forget the sunscreen.

Toughing it out with the toughest

OVER lahar, mud and through streams and ravines. Anyone of lesser stuff would have cringed at the images. But you knew you were tough enough to embark on an equally tough experience—the Ford Pinatubo Conquest.

Ford has showcased the performance of its Ranger pick-ups by loading them with Shell Diesoline and Rimula X as they engage in a challenging journey to the peak of Mt. Pinatubo.

In its second year, the Pinatubo Conquest once again highlighted the reliability of Shell Diesoline as fuel for the Ford Ranger, contributing to the success of every road travel, no matter how rough or how smooth.

Because it is drawn from pure crude oil, Shell Diesoline should provide you with more than enough power to get you up the steepest of slopes and handle the craziest of curves. And since you are eager to get it on, its anti-foam additive will ensure that you don't spend too much time waiting while loading up.

Used for diesel-fed engines, superior quality Shell Diesoline has been reformulated to comply with the Clean Air Act specification for lower sulphur content.

Diesoline

RIMULA-X

On the other hand, on such a demanding trip, you will need the best kind of protection for your prized investment. Shell Rimula X's neutralizing agents aid in acid formation that help coat the engine. The enhanced lubricity reduces friction for a smoother ride over bumpy roads, more engine power, and better fuel economy. The superb formulation, meanwhile, provides longer oil stability even under extreme temperatures.

Due to their superior performance, Shell Diesoline and Rimula X are Ford's choice for their Rangers. Each Ford Ranger that comes out of Ford plants are loaded with Shell Diesoline and Rimula X to ensure maximum performance for the vehicles.

Goodyear manages tire stress before it hits the road

WORKING tirelessly to invent the next-generation tire, Goodyear design engineers need to manage stress--tire stress, that is.

Tire stress is the cornering, stopping, accelerating, rolling and weight-bearing forces that a tire undergoes on a vehicle.

With motorists taking unprecedented notice of their tires these days, the need to deal with stresses on the internal components of a tire is growing in importance, according to Mike Trinko, tire-vehicle engineer.

"All structures that carry loads are stressed in some way, tires included," he said.

"We can't make stress disappear completely, so we're learning new ways to manage it. In fact, we're designing it into today's tires on our terms."

The benefits are evident to motorists, Trinko added.

How a tire reacts to stress contributes to vehicle ride, tire durability and fuel efficiency. "Consumers want tires that offer security, dependability and a certain toughness."

Engineers use computer models to evaluate stress between tire components, the reinforcing belts, cords and rubber that give it strength. The results are telling.

"How a tire reacts to stress and strain is a difficult problem to solve," Trinko said. "We have to account for the forces from the road, plus the pressure distributed across the tire 'footprint,' the handsized patch of rubber in contact with the road.

"To add to that complexity, a rolling tire's rubber converts mechanical energy into heat, which contributes to rolling resistance and reduced fuel economy."

Before the computer, "We used experimental methods in the laboratory to detect stress—with questionable success," he said. When Goodyear performed the first finite element analysis—or stress test—of a loaded tire on a computer, a monumental change in tire engineering followed.

GOODYEAR

Laboratory tests now validate results of computer modeling. Durability tests and three-dimensional holographic laser images screen test tires and look for variations in internal stresses in new constructions.

"New technology in our computer model is giving us a leap forward before those tires ever reach the lab.

"We're now able to predict cornering properties of an actual rolling tire in a matter of a few hours, instead of weeks where we actually have to build and test tires. This approach enables us to look beyond tire durability into actual tire performance tailored for special vehicles.

"As vehicles get lighter and more flexible, they're also sensitive to more subtle vibrations. The computer helps us solve these stress-induced challenges," Trinko said.

It also reduces the time it takes to get a new tire to market, he said. For example, the new Goodyear Aquatred

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Vicente Ilustre 240m² P6M with Bung • 928-3267

SAN JUAN

Buchanan North Grnhills 892sqm Pgr 1481788421

RIZAL

Ipil St Marikina Hgts 5Bdrms Pgr 1481788421

LOT

KALOOCAN

Deparo Cal City 5000m² VLot P3500T/m² 928-1469

LAS PINAS

192 m² 5700/m² neg Manuela 4A 8747234

MANDALUYONG

Sto. Rosario 348sqm Nr. Boni Ave. T-532-4333

Wack Wack 1100m² P40T/m² Near Manuela T671-4421

PARANAQUE

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PASIG

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LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE is hereby given that the estate of the late Rafaela A. Castro has been extrajudicially settled by her heirs as per Doc#345; Page#70, Book #41, Series of 2001 before Notary Public Lope M. Velasco.

(PDI-May 9, 16 & 23, 2001)

NOTICE OF LOSS

NOTICE is hereby given to the public that I, Ulrich Bosse, German citizen, have lost my ICR with No. 269499. Anyone who finds said document, kindly return it to the holder or to the Bureau Of Immigration within 10 days from this publication. Please contact holder at 645-5338.
(April 25 & May 2, 9, 2001)

PERSONAL

PRAYER TO ST. JOSEPH

Oh, St. Joseph, whose protection is so great, so strong, so prompt before the throne of God. I place in you all my interest and desires. Oh, St. Joseph, do assist me by your powerful intercession, and obtain for me from your divine son all spiritual blessings, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. So that, having engaged here below your heavenly power, I may offer my thanksgiving and homage to the most loving of fathers. Oh, St. Joseph, I never weary contemplating you, and Jesus asleep in your arms; I dare not approach while He reposes near your heart. Press Him in my name and kiss His fine head for me and ask Him to return the Kiss when I draw my dying breath. St. Joseph, Patron of departing souls - Pray for me.

This prayer was found in the fiftieth year of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. In 1505 it was sent from the Pope to Emperor Charles when he was going into battle. Whoever shall read this prayer or hear it or keep it about themselves, shall never die a sudden death, or be drowned, nor shall poison take effect on them; neither shall they fall into the hands of the enemy or shall be burned in any fire or shall be overpowered in battle.

Say for nine mornings for anything you may desire. It has never been known to fail so be sure you really want what you ask.

PRAYER TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

Holy Spirit thou who make me see everything and show me the way to reach my ideal. You who give me the divine gift to forgive and forget the wrong that is done to me and who are in all instances of my life with me. I, in this short dialogue, want to thank You for everything and confirm once more that I never want to be separated from You, no matter how great the material desires may be. I want to be with You and my loved ones in Your Perpetual Glory. Amen.

PROJECT MANAGER

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INQUIRER TRiViA
By BONG BARRAMEDA

Peeping Tom

Q. Why is a person who gets pleasure, esp. sexual pleasure, from secretly watching others called a "peeping Tom?"

A. The story of the original peeping Tom is tied to that of Lady Godiva, a legendary 11th-century patroness of Coventry, England. Godiva, on the dare of her husband, rode naked through streets on horseback so that he would abolish a heavy tax imposed on the citizens of Coventry. Before she made her famous ride, Godiva issued a proclamation that all of the townspeople remain indoors and keep their shutters closed during the ride. Everyone complied with her request except for Tom, the tailor. He peeped at her through a window, was struck blind, and ever since that day was known as Peeping Tom of Coventry.

For the Record. Many studies indicate that, in general, men have better daylight vision than women. Conversely, women have better night vision than men.

First of all. The world's first adhesive stamp, the brainchild of Sir Rowland Hill, went into use in Great Britain, on May 6, 1840. Because it cost a penny and bore the profile of Queen Victoria on a dark background, the historic stamp was called the Penny Black.

WORD WATCH

Boso: Tagalog slang for "peep," from the Spanish *buzo*, meaning "diver."

PDI – May 9, 2001

STI pre-school explores IT

WE live in the age of information technology, in a borderless world where we are constantly bombarded with data from all parts of the globe at the speed of light. Believe it or not, children could be better drivers and riders in this information highway than adults if they are given appropriate stimuli during the critical early years of their lives when the learning windows of their minds are open. This happens during preschool age.

When STI, the country's largest computer colleges and education network, opened its first two pre-schools in 1998, the idea was to harness the power of technology to shape kids who would benefit most from its use. The idea has grown since then, as did STI Pre-School, which now numbers about seven in several key Metro Manila cities.

While one normally considers only air-conditioned classrooms as the benchmark for gauging pre-school facilities, STI Pre-School goes beyond providing a comfortable and safe environment for its students. Its facilities include the latest computers and multimedia equipment so that children can familiarize themselves with technology using cutting edge tools that aid them in creative and technical expressions.

In addition, students can browse through a well-equipped library that offers a variety of educational materials that cover a wide range of subjects, development-appropriate educational toys, and technological equipment.

STI Pre-School offers a unique, stimulating world where the best of traditional values and methods are fused with new age technology. For example, part of its outstanding curriculum is Creative Learning through Technology (CLT), a multimedia program that uses specially evaluated and selected software to provide learners with a technological edge as they learn basic concepts in the languages, arts and mathematics.

Studies show that students need to learn how to use computers flexibly, creatively and purposefully, and this can only be done if these technology tools are integrated into, not isolated from, the curriculum and daily activities of the children. When integrated, computers could enhance the learning process of children, adding a sense of fun and flexibility. They provide a sense of control and develop a child's autonomy, inspiring them to learn independently while encouraging collaborative learning where a child could learn from other children. They stimulate thinking, imagination and creativity.

Parents who wish to peek into this fun and educational pre-school world, at any time and from the comfort of their homes and offices, are provided a virtual eye via the school's unique Parents On-Line Facility (POLF) which enables them to log in and view their children's real time activities.

Let your child fearlessly explore his borderless mind, with STI Pre-School as his information superhighway and gateway to a world of creativity and imagination.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
RURAL INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT PROJECT (RIDP)
ADB LOAN NO. 1332-PHI (SF)

INVITATION TO PREQUALIFY AND BID

The Government of the Republic of the Philippines, through a loan from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) is currently implementing the Rural Infrastructure Development Project (RIDP) in Zamboanga del Norte and Zamboanga del Sur under ADB Loan No. 1332-PHI (SF).

The RIDP is in need of a consultancy firm to do full monitoring and evaluation survey with the following qualifications.

- An Asian Development Bank (ADB)-accredited consultancy firm
- With previous experience/familiarity in Mindanao area

The full M & E Survey should undertake the following:

1. Gather and measure data to assess the socio-economic and other impact of the project in the target beneficiaries/communities.
2. Identify constraints which inhibit the full attainment of the Project/Component objectives
3. Identify lessons for future modifications on the concept and approaches and provide alternatives to aid the implementation agency in future similar projects.

Interested parties may get in touch with the Liaison Office of RIDP at the Special Projects Coordination and Management Assistance Division (SPCMAD), Rm. 302, Department of Agriculture Bldg., Diliman, Quezon City, Telephone Nos.: 9279636 to 39. Deadline for the submission of the letter of intent is **May 23, 2001.**

(Sgd.) EDMUND J. SANA
Project Director

(PDI – May 9 & 13, 2001)

BITS & Clips

Cutest baby search

THE AINON Cutest Baby Photo contest is on. Babies up to 18 months old are qualified to join. Enclose in an envelope two latest 3R colored pictures of the baby (one close up and 1 whole body) together with five pieces of Ainon Baby products wrapper or printed box. At back of each picture print baby's complete name, parents' names and signature, address, telephone numbers, baby's birth date and age. Mail entries to Ainon Cutest Baby Photo Contest, PO Box 3136 Manila, or bring your entries to "Everything for Babies and Kids Trade Fair 2001" on May 11 before 3 p.m. at Megatrade Hall 1 of SM Megamall.

E-tailing seminar

THE PHILIPPINE Trade Training Center invites everyone to attend a seminar on E-tailing: Internet Gateway for Entrepreneurs on Friday, May 11 at Room D, second floor of the PTTC, Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue corner Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City. For inquiries, call Charie Enrile/Amador Prado of the Trade Business Management Division at 8341344-49 and 831-9988, fax 834-1343, or e-mail pttc@dti.gov.ph and charitoenrile@dti.gov.ph.

APC channel partner program

AMERICAN Power Conversion launches its channel partner program for the northern Luzon area on Friday, May 11 at the Baguio Country Club, Baguio City. The support program is designed to provide useful sales tools, marketing programs, training workshops, and product updates to IT resellers and sales partners. For further inquiries, call Odette Malong at (02)637-5457, or log on to www.apcc.com/ph/reseller.

ARIES-MCN AGREEMENT

IBM business partner Aries IT Systems, Incorporated (Aries) recently signed an agreement supporting leading telecommunication engineering and consultancy company, MCN Philippines, Inc., a subsidiary of Mycom Int'l., through IBM products such as IBM eServer xSeries, and ACS services. Present were (seated from left) Johnny KC Lim, Aries executive director; George Hashim, Mycom chief operating officer for South East AP; Werner Ton, Mycom projects director; (standing from left) Yap Kok Kong, contracts manager and administrator; Karen Yusi, IBM Philippines value partner manager; Kenneth Mondero, Mycom Philippines general manager and Enrico Magat, Mycom Philippines resource and recruitment manager.

PLDT, METRO PACIFIC GROUP HONORED

3M Philippines recently mounted a "Salute to PLDT and Metro Pacific Group of Companies" at the Renaissance New World Hotel as a special tribute to two of the country's largest business organizations. The Salute is a customer-focused product show that is designed to position 3M as a solutions provider and strategic partner. Candy Quinto (right), business team leader for Abrasive Systems Group, explains to a guest the latest 3M technology in abrasive systems. 3M's roots can be traced to the abrasives market where its founders first ventured in the abrasives business. 3M pioneered the modern abrasive systems and has maintained world leadership in this area through constant investment in research and new product development.

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Our Dearly Beloved

TEH SIU YONG LIMPE

(Wife of late **James V. Limpe**)
Born: May 17, 1906 – Died: May 6, 2001

Peacefully joined her Creator
at the age of 95.

Her Loving Children and Grandchildren:

JULIUS wife **Lily Chen**, children **Linda, Patricia, Joyce & Manuel Uychiaoco, Natalie & Michael Uy, Olivia & Benny Aw, Isabel & Edwin Chungunco**, and **Irene**;

GLORIA (†) husband **Manuel L. Ang**, children **Raymond & Carolina Dy, Roxanne & Conrad Siy, Randolph & Ma. Gloria, Roselle & Jonathan Sayson, Romilda & James Caron** and **Ronith & James Cogswell** (†);

ANNA McAVOY, children **Carol Ann & Wayne Miyashiro, Philip Elise & Jeannette McAvoy** and **Karen Lynelle**;

BETTY NGO, children **Lizanne & Enrique Castillo, Kenneth & Rowena Yao, Bernette & Augusto Ong, Jeanette & Alex Tan, Joy Anne & Henry Young, Jeffrey Andrew** and **Jill Marie**;

ANTHONY wife **Emily Ting**, son **Stephen & Tracy Limpe**;

JERRY wife **Lucita Roxas Chua**, children **Peggy Ann & Nelson Uy, Polly Ann & Richard Alianan, Michael James & Karen Ruth Limpe** and **Penny Ann**;

BESSIE JOY, children **Jennifer Tan** and **Peter James Tan**;

LILIAN husband **Richard Kwok**, children **Richard Kwok, Jr.** and **Ryan Kwok**;

Great grandchildren, nephews, nieces and other relatives request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her body lies in state at her residence, 2162 F.B. Harrison St., Pasay city (Beside our Lady of Sorrow Church).

Interment will take place at Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque on Monday, May 14, 2001 at 9:00 in the morning.

MAJ. CLODUALDO "DODONG" V. BRINGAS, SR. (Ret.)

Peacefully joined his Creator on the 7th day of May 2001 at the age of 78.

A loving husband to **Baby Galindez Bringas**; a beloved father to his children **Irma & Ding Aguado, Doy & Mary Ann Bringas, Lee & Cecilie Bringas, Luci & Dino Suelto, Susan Joy & Rey De Leon & Joy Villarino**; a wonderful grandpa to **Marc, Doji, Zeus, Anya, Jorell, Paolo, Patrick, Issa, Elijah, Diego, Jinno & Kate**; his brothers and sisters **Manuel** (†) & **Mary Bringas** (†), **Remedios & Dominador Dimaranan, Trinidad & Juanito Recio, Eliseo V. Bringas** (†), **Arturo & Hermelina Bringas**; his in-laws **Sonny & Jake Ilustre** (†), **Jun & Ginny Galindez, Marvin** (†) **& Percy Galindez, Renato & Aida Galindez**.

We, his family, request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul as he is born into Eternal Life.

His remains lie in state at the Premiere Suite of Loyola Memorial Chapels in Guadalupe, Makati City.

Military interment will be on Thursday, May 10, 2001 at the Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina after the 8:30 a.m. service at the Loyola Memorial Chapels in Guadalupe, Makati City.

Col. Mariano Arcenas Dinglasan (Ret.)

Of Roxas City, Capiz

Peacefully passed away on the morning of May 6, 2001
At the full age of 89

His loving wife, **FELY**; children **NONONG** and **BOOTS, FRANKY, ARTHUR, LIVY, ROSE** and **TED AQUINO, MEL** and **ANDREW CHIU**, sisters **CHEDING PANGANIBAN** and **INDAY MELENCIO**, grandchildren, relatives and friends request prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

His cremated remains will be at the Christ the King Church, Green Meadows, From May 9th to May 11th, 2001.

Our Dearly Beloved Father

JUAN R. SUNGA

Peacefully joined his Creator on April 29, 2001
in Seattle, Washington at the age of 65.
His family, relatives and friends request the pious readers
to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.
His remains will lie in state at the Arlington Memorial Chapels, G.
Araneta Avenue, Quezon City on May 10 & 11, 2001.
Interment will be on May 12, 2001, 10:00 a.m.
at Eternal Gardens, Caloocan City.

We know
that God
raised the Lord
Jesus from death.
He will raise us
to life with Jesus.
He will present
us, along with
you, to God.
2 Cor. 4:14

DR. JOAQUIN PEREZ é ISAAC, Sr., M.D.

of Naga City
August 21, 1920 – May 7, 2001
UST College of Medicine, Class '48
Papal Awardee, Past Grand Knight,
Divino Rostro Council No. 5183 K of C
Past Pres., Cams. Sur Medical Society,
Past Bd. Member, C.S. Nat'l Red Cross
Charter Member, Camarines Sur Lions Club
Past Pres., Rotary Clubs of Naga & Caceres,

Peacefully joined Our Lord on May 7, 2001 at the age of 80.

His bereaved wife **Virginia H. Felipe-Perez**; children **Dr. Joaquin, Jr., M.D. & Nemesia Sartorio; Dulce & Engr. Nilo Rey; Jose; Ramon & Dr. Rhodora Roa, M.D.; Dr. Emeterio, M.D., & Dr. Sylvia Aliño, M.D.; Miguel, Sr. & Ester Tuason; Jorge & Evelyn Hilutin**; and **Benjamin & Merle Sia**; grandchildren, brothers, sisters and in-laws, nephews and nieces, other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Funeraria Imperial, Peñafrancia Avenue, Naga City.

Interment will be on Sunday, May 13, 2001 after the 2:00 p.m. Requiem Mass.

Our Dearly Beloved

FLORA ABALOS BALBIDO

Peacefully joined her Creator and her husband Naning on May 4, 2001 at the age of 88.

Her loving children **Nieves B. Villanueva, Julieta B. Odero, Catalina B. Manalastas, Florencio A. Balbido, Rosalinda B. Oliver, Estrellita B. Wong, Marietta B. Gonzales**; sons-in-law **Alex Odero, Jun Manalastas, Tony Oliver, Louie Wong, Raul Gonzales**, daughter-in-law **Belle Balbido**; grandchildren, brothers and other relatives request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at Rizal Funeral Homes, Cementina St., (near Libertad St.) Pasay City.

Interment will be on Sunday, May 13, 2001 at the Manila Memorial Park, Parañaque City after the 9:00 a.m. Mass at Rizal Funeral Homes.

---

†
AMOG

Rafael Antonio R. Sunico

Was called home by the Father on May 7, 2001
at the age of 50.

His loving wife **LENI GRACE ANNE**;
children **CHARMAGNE ANNE, RAFAEL BRUNO JR.**, and
RAYMOND BENEDICT; brother, sister, in-laws, relatives and
friends grieve his passing yet celebrate
his going home to the Father in heaven.
His remains lie in state at the Our Lady of Mount Carmel Shrine
Parish Church, New Manila, Quezon City.
Interment will be on the 10th of May 2001.

"I am the resurrection and the life,
whoever believes in Me, even if he dies, will live,
and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die."
John 11:25-26

TAN SI SO

of Magallanes, Sorsogon and Tierra Pura Subd., Q.C.

Peacefully joined his Creator on May 6, 2001 at the age of 88.

His loving children and in-laws **Lily** and **Willy Go, Conchita, Eddy** and **Cecilia, Sandy, Erlinda** and **Lorna**; grandchildren **Joie, Grace, Jam, Cathy, Edward, Michelle** and **Kim**; brothers, sisters, in-laws, relatives and friends mourn his passing away but celebrate his eternal rest with God. We request everyone to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Hope Chapel, Arlington Memorial Chapel, 12-G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment at the Holy Cross Memorial Park, Novaliches, Quezon City is set on Friday, 9:00 a.m., May 11, 2001 after the Mass at Arlington.

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VOLATILE TIMES

Global firm manages risks for clients' success

BY REGINA GALANG REYES

IN VOLATILE times, businesses need secure anchors. And considering Philippine conditions today, businesses in the country direly need these anchors to survive the ordinary and extraordinary risks in business amidst the swift economic, political and social changes.

In this situation, the role of a risk and insurance services firm like Marsh Philippines, Inc. takes on greater relevance. Aptly, their mission is "to create and deliver risk solutions and services that make their clients more successful." With the strength of their mother company, the giant global professional services firm of the Marsh & McLennan Companies, and its strong organizational competence developed since 1954, Marsh Philippines, Inc. has provided and is providing solutions and services that go beyond insurance brokering to companies in the Philippines.

ON THE SPOT

by the People at Work Staff

To get a glimpse of how all these works, People at Work staff interviewed the top brass of Marsh Philippines, Inc. and came up with interesting insights on this intricate but highly relevant service. President & CEO David Jacob, VP for Energy/ Reinsurance Gavi Guy, VP for Risk Management German Plan, Jr., VP for Broking Operations Ramon Zandueta and AVP for Sales & Business Development Marikit Legaspi translate their business in layman's terms in this On the Spot interview.

What are your products and services, in simple terms?

Jacob: We're insurance brokers so I think that it's important first to determine what a broker is as compared to an insurance company. Technically, as a broker, we're the middlemen between the client and the insurance company. We represent the client and we arrange or design programs on behalf of the client. In terms of services and products, this would range from every single aspect of what we could do in the non-life insurance sector. Our products range from the very, very simple motorcar insurance and maybe, personal insurance which is for homeowners and the like, to the more complex insurance for large infrastructure or multi-national companies such as power plants, manufacturing facilities.

You said you're an intermediary between the client and the insurance company. Do you have a roster of accredited insurance companies that you represent?

Jacob: Our accredited insurance companies are basically a combination of multinationals and local insurance companies. We adhere to very strict guidelines, security guidelines, posted by our parent company in New York. So, if an insurance company falls below a certain standard, we're not allowed to transact with them. We make sure that there is solid financial backbone in these companies.

What is your experience in handling insurance claims?

Plan: We have handled so many claims of all sizes—small, medium, large. In handling claims, the value-added services that we offer are highlighted. One of the main reasons why our company exists is to look after the interests of the client when claims are encountered.

What has been your largest claim so far?

Guy: A $28-million claim, during the earthquake in 1990. The insured company's facilities shut down for a couple of weeks. Even when they started operations, they could not bring out their products because the roads were not passable, probably for several more weeks. It took the insurance company five to six months to pay the claim. Now, you might think that to be a long time but again, considering the amount of the claim and the documentation required, by market practice, that would be considered a quick settlement.

Zandueta: I'd like to share with you a small story of mine, where I was actually involved in the processing of a large claim and where our value-added services as a broker were really utilized.

There was this semi-conductor company which was not using a broker before. They had their insurance arrangements made directly with an insurance company. When we came in, we did a total review of their insurance program. We made recommendations. We pointed out that they were underinsured by 80 percent. You may have to insure your assets based, not on sound values or fair market value, but rather on replacement costs. They took our recommendations seriously. Two or three months after, they suffered a big loss due to a fire. And the loss amounted to P200 million. We were able to process the claim within a reasonable period of time, like two months, at the most, because we really stayed on top of it. We met with the client and the insurance companies. We made sure that things were moving. We made sure that somebody was really pushing the claim forward until its completion. Had they not listened to our recommendations, to the proposals that we made, they would have only been able to claim P40M. And that would have forced the company to close down.

So that was a timely intervention.

Jacob: We have had similar situations many times. Calls come in. They ask us to do a review. They like what we put down. They may already have an existing intermediary but because of the report that we put together, they like it so much, they appoint us as broker. Then, they suffer a loss. And if we had not come in and made the recommendations, they would have been uninsured. To the client, this is our value as a company. Of course, the last thing we want is for a loss to occur. But when losses do occur, the clients then realize, "Oh, my God! Thank God we were able to hire them."

Aside from insurance brokering, what other services do you offer?

Guy: One of the major services that we provide is insurance advisory and consultancy for projects. Projects could be infrastructure, power plants, manufacturing plants. We get to be involved during the development, construction and operational phases of the project. Sometimes, we act as consultants or advisors to the lenders, who lend money to the project. And there are times that we work with the developer or the owner of the project in coming up with the risk management and insurance programs for the project.

Jacob: We do these not only for large projects but also for clients that already have an in-house broker or an established relationship with an insurance company that is very, very difficult to break. They would normally hire us to come in and review their existing policies and make recommendations. So, maybe we're not involved in placing the risk but they'll hire us to do an overall review and evaluation of the current insurance.

Zandueta: We are also into what we call enterprise risk management. We look at the various risks that a company faces. We just don't limit ourselves to the hazard risks, which ordinarily is the subject matter of insurance, but also look at other exposures, including political and economic. We study the total operations of the company—their strategic, operational and financial risks. Our company is positioned to take a look at all these exposures and be able to sit down with the client and help them come out with solutions to address these risks. We also have another company that specifically looks into market penetration, market segmentation and feasibility studies.

Jacob: We're one part of the other huge subsidiaries of our parent company, Marsh & McLennan Companies. We have two other sister companies, Putnam Investments and the Mercer Consulting Group. MMC is really our parent. The first is involved in investment, portfolio and fund management. The other company is involved in general, overall public consulting, that is, human resources, employees benefits consulting, strategic consulting, change management consulting, and identity branding.

When we see a client, yes, we will offer the risk and insurance services but we also let them know that we have two other companies, under the umbrella of our parent, that technically provide a full range of financial services.

Since when have you been providing enterprise risk management services and consulting?

Jacob: Actually, since 1999, although our sister companies have been in existence for a long time. We're using the power of collaboration with our subsidiaries. We officially launched the Marsh and McLennan Enterprise Risk in 1998. This group is responsible for lassoing in all the services for the company.

Would that target companies that would like to enter into Philippine business?

Jacob: Not only enter, but also those that are already existing. We approach an established conglomerate and say, "We can be able to evaluate your four quadrants of risk—strategic, operational, financial and hazards."

Or companies who would like to acquire other companies?

Zandueta: Yes. We also have this whole team, dedicated to mergers and acquisitions.

Plan: Marsh has another separate entity, which is Marsh Risk Consulting. This is composed of engineers. There are other ways to handle risks, which include loss prevention, loss mitigation, avoidance, and self-insurance. In situations when a transfer of the risk to an insurance company is not possible or economically desirable, this is where Marsh Risk Consulting comes in. The engineers can do loss control service and they would give recommendations with regard to protection of facilities against various kinds of hazards. This group also provides consulting with regards to contingency planning.

Jacob: The enterprise risk management is obviously something new. But risk management, as a whole, is really the main thrust of insurance. When we talk about enterprise risk, we talk about bringing the other two companies together with Marsh and acting as one, when we go see a client. But risk management is really the thrust. When we see a client, we just don't sell insurance products. We talk to them about insurance philosophies, mandates. We don't want to be run-of-the-mill. We're a much more sophisticated outfit.

Legaspi: Insurance isn't always the answer. As consultants, we recommend various ways of handling one's risks. Insurance is a transfer of risk. Other ways of dealing with it would be thru elimination, avoidance or simply reduction. Either way, this is where loss control measures come in.

So, what's your competitive advantage? What are the unique traits of Marsh that would distinguish it from other companies?

Jacob: First, we're the only broker that really has a full complement. I'm talking about our group of companies. We have risk insurance, investment management and overall consulting. So if we want to be seen, or we want to be able to take experiences from our sister companies, or their involvement in other

GLOBAL/B14

PHOTOS BY ROMY HOMILLADA

FROM left are Gavi Guy, VP for Energy/Reinsurance; Ramon Zandueta, VP for Broking Operations; David Jacob, president and CEO; Marikit Legaspi, AVP Sales & Business Development; and German Plan, Jr., VP for Risk Management

MARSH management team: One company, one team

Consulting giants join forces to strengthen market foothold

TWO global giants in the professional services industry have joined resources in the Philippines to become a major force in human capital and benefits consulting services. These are William M. Mercer (WMM), which is into human resource consulting services, and Marsh, which is into risk and insurance services.

WMM belongs to the Mercer Consulting Group, Inc., which had been ranked number one in the list of the top 25 consulting companies in the world. Mercer is also one of several organizations of Marsh & McLennan, a global professional services firm with annual revenues exceeding $10 billion.

Solutions

WMM's aggressive entry in the Philippines began when it acquired a Swiss-based global consulting company, which had already been operating in the country for more than seven years. With this acquisition, WMM hopes to achieve its global mission, which is "to help our clients use the power of their people to enhance their business success." WMM partners with its clients in all aspects of strategic and operational human resource and consulting and implementation.

With the establishment of a branch in the Philippines, WMM has strengthened its presence in the Asia-Pacific region. As of year 2000, WMM has more than 130 offices operating in 37 countries and territories worldwide.

Philippines country manager Noel de Leon points out that their goal is to be the preferred HR consulting firm. With the right combination of competent staff and excellent products and services, WMM is ready and eager to achieve their goals.

Balanced score card

De Leon believes that winning over its competitors requires more than growth on its financial aspect and that more weight should be given to other important factors such as employees, processes and innovation and relationship with customers.

He says that WMM invests in people through its Partnering for Success (PFS) program. The name PFS reflects WMM's belief that to become a successful firm, it has to partner with its employees. De Leon states that WMM believes that successful careers are built through effective partnership, with colleagues and with clients. WMM has, as one its priorities, the individual growth of its employees, which eventually drives Mercer's overall success. Stress is given on the need for continuous learning.

De Leon notes that WMM values integrity above all, putting as one of its top priorities its clients whom they recognize as requiring only its best efforts. He adds that WMM recognizes that thought leadership and innovation is the lifeblood of its business and that personal initiative further fuels its growth.

Human capital

According to WMM Senior Consultant Jose Ma. San Buenaventura, the specific role and objective of an HR Consultant is to enhance the success of businesses by enhancing organizational and individual performance. He also emphasizes that Mercer's Human Capital Management Consulting ensures this through the effective alignment of human resources programs with the organization's business.

Mercer's Human Capital Management practice focuses on two areas: performance management consulting and rewards management consulting. San Buenaventura says, "In performance management consulting, we deal with organizational, team and individual performance and development of executive, management and non-management employees. We conduct benchmarking studies and design and implement goal-setting, employee performance and development programs, performance monitoring systems and competency-based human resources programs. Our consulting in these areas reflects an integrated approach to selection, assessment, performance planning, individual development and training."

In rewards management consulting, Mercer's work ranges from compensation strategy development to detailed plan design and implementation.

They develop compensation and benefits programs, broad-based incentives and stock programs, salary systems and team and individual incentive systems. San Buenaventura states, "Our rewards consulting is supported by a large database of total compensation practices and by proprietary computer systems for effective program maintenance. It is very critical for us to be able to connect performance and rewards programs for our clients in a manner that positions them for growth and profitability. With these, we are able to provide the architecture and the tools to help clients attract and retain the employees they need for sustained business success."

GISB

Sr. Consulting Analyst for Global Information Service Business (GISB) Celeste Filamor is the overall coordinator of the compensation and benefits survey and all the other information products of William M. Mercer. Mercer's compensation and benefits survey is regularly participated in by various companies to check their competitiveness in the market in terms of their pay practice. This is one tool which allows companies to hire and retain the most competent people.

The Total Remuneration Service is just one of Mercer's information products. This is Mercer's compensation and benefits survey done annually for different industries across the market. According to Filamor, the strength of this survey stems largely from the methodology it uses. Whereas all the other surveys in the market is done through job-matching, the TRS is conducted through job-matching and position evaluation, allowing more room for accurate comparison. Also, because of this methodology, multinational firms are now given the kind of information which would allow them to compare their companies across different countries within several regions.

As the market is becoming increasingly competitive, especially in the advent of globalization more and more companies are finding the need to update themselves with the latest trends in pay practices in the industry. Currently, in order to keep phase with the changes in the industry, Mercer's direction is to move towards HR E-commerce. Beginning with its TRS, users worldwide may now access the TRSis site in order to do evaluation and job matching, and in the immediate future, conduct data gathering through the Internet as well. This year, clients already have the option to purchase the report either in hard copy format or in a CD-rom. All offices are technically equipped to produce report in the CD-rom format.

According to Filamor, although Mercer has made sure it kept pace with the market's dynamism, it has not lost its core intention, which is to be able to provide both accurate information and quality service. She says, "This is the other main difference of this survey with the other surveys in the market. Should a client join this survey, they are enrolled to a one-year membership. This being a membership, clients may contact Mercer to request for some information or the latest updates in the market. Also the membership allows them to request for some special analysis or a quick survey covering items which may or may not be part of the TRS."

Employee Benefits

Employee benefits (EB) consulting services is another major service of Mercer for its clients. This covers Group Term Life, Group Personal Accident, and Group Medical Insurance and Retirement Plans. Vicky Ongchangco, Vice President for Employee Benefits, stresses the need for competitive benefits as they have a significant impact on the company's ability to attract and retain its people.

Ongchangco says that in this area of service, "We represent the client. We offer employee benefits services involving review of existing programs. We compare market practice and make recommendations based on industry practice. In line with this, we handle orientations, which their in-house HR group may be unable to do. We put a program together after making a study. We design programs not yet available in the market."

She believes that the EB group has always been a strong player in the industry, and despite the advent of several competitors, WMM is confident that they will continue to have a strong grip in the market because of the distinct quality service they have been known for.

WMM is set to introduce more of its products and services in the local market. According to de Leon, the same effort has made it the leading human resource consulting firm in the United States. He states that with a potent mix of talent and quality service, WMM is not far from achieving its goal of being the preferred solution provider in the industry.

WILLIAM M Mercer's top team: from left are Noel de Leon, Country Manager; Celeste Filamor, Sr. Consulting Analyst for Global Information Service Business; Vicky Ongchangco, VP for Employee Benefits; and Jose Ma. San Buenaventura, Senior Consultant.

SOME members of the Human Capital Management Consulting Team in an off-site project with a semicon company. From left are Ingrid Palma, Consulting Analyst; Royal Lyn Camacho, Consulting Analyst; Roque, Consultant; and Karen Pantig, Consultant.

How do you deal with a messy desk?

DEAR WW: It's a wonder that I found my computer to write this e-mail. My desk is a mess. How do you get out from under a messy desk?

Trying To Cleanup My Act

WORKING WOUNDED

By Bob Rosner

I just read about a doctor named Charles Emerick who is an ear, nose and throat specialist in Portland, Oregon. According to the News of the Weird, Dr. Emerick collects the stuff that he's removed from his patients. He's got a bag of decomposed bees (he removed them from a kid who'd run into a swarm of them), a plastic whistle (before it was removed his patient whistled with every breath), and an eraser that a kid had put up his nose (it stayed there for 15 years).

Well, your collection may not rival Dr. Emerick's, but it sounds as if your desk could use a little surgery. For some tips on how to get out from under the "collectibles," I turned to the best organizational consultant I know—Ellen Langan of the Seattle-based Langan + Associates. How do I know she's so great? I visited her office unannounced one day and her desk was so clean it sent me into a major depression. I've adapted the following questions from her advice.

- Do you empty your in-box each day? Ms. Langan points out that your in-box at the office is just like your mailbox at home. Neglect your mailbox and people will think you're away. Do you want to send that same message to the people you work with? Act on each in-box item EVERY day: act, read, file, or throw 'em out!
- Do you look for chances to throw things out? Inside your file cabinets, keep the items in each file folder in chronological order with the most recent addition in the front. Each time you open a folder, look in back to see if there's anything you can toss.
- Do you limit your desktop space to things you're working on today? It's a daily fight to keep a desktop up-to-date, but I've found that it's worth the struggle. Save the last five minutes of each workday to prepare your desk for tomorrow's tasks. It's a pain at night, but you'll love yourself in the morning.
- Are you selective about what you read? I don't know about you, but I've yet to meet anyone who actually had time to read everything she "should" be reading. Ms.Langan's advice: scan most items. Save your reading time for items that really deserve your attention.

The biggest surprise from my interview with Ms Langan? When I asked her for a book to recommend to readers of this column, she avoided all those organizer books that have become so popular lately. Instead she suggested that people pick up a copy of "Seven Habits of Highly Effective People" by Stephen Covey (Fireside, 1989). I have to agree. After all, it's tough to have a clean desk when your life is a mess.

Here are the results of the recent workingwounded.com poll: How would you describe your desk right now?

—Clean as a whistle, 12.5%
—Alright with me, 34.7%
—Pig sty, 52.6%

Our winning messy desk strategy comes from Chris F. In Billings, Montana. "I used to have a paper avalanche every day. Then I put an infrared sensor on my in-box. When the papers reached a certain height it triggered a sound I detest, the crunching of cereal. Then I pointed another sensor on my desk, it triggered a tape of my mom's voice. I've since removed the sensors, the fear of the negative stimuli did its job."

(E-mail feedback to bob@workingwounded.com

Global firm manages risks...

(From page B13)

areas of risk, we have that advantage of pulling that together for the clients. So the sheer size of the company is an absolute advantage.

Second, because of our manpower, we're usually the first one in the market to introduce innovative ideas and products. And I think being the first is always an advantage because it's only a matter of time before the other brokers pick up and follow you. But being the first into the market sends a message to a lot of our clients and prospects that we are the leader. So I think that is a distinct advantage that we have.

During the crisis in the early 80s, when the market was very, very hard and there was no insurance capacity, Marsh and McLennan set up excess capacity in Bermuda by forming two insurance companies to provide additional capacity to our clients. In the face of a hard market, no other broker did that.

From a local perspective, I really think that we have the best complement of staff in the market. Marsh is a combination of three distinct broker operations, Marsh and McClennan, Johnson and Higgins and All Asia Sedgwick Insurance Brokers, Inc. These three companies, at one time, ranked among the top 3 in the world. So you combine these three in one company, you have the best staff and employees in the market. We are also highly selective when it comes to recruiting our local staff. We have certain standards the prospective employee has to meet.

Zandueta: And to add to that, we have global resources that are within our fingertips because of the merger of these three major companies. We have intellectual properties that are beyond compare. We can access several databases, which help our clients and address their respective exposures. Clients can ask us for benchmarking or for solutions that similar companies have undertaken. We're not just limited to giving advice on insurance but also strategic advice, as well. So, we have the capabilities and resources to be able help our clients become successful. Basically, that's our mission.

Plan: I'd like to add something as to how we differentiate ourselves from the competition. We are a wholly owned subsidiary with a parent organization that specializes in the field of insurance and risk management consulting. That gives us independence, unlike many of our competitors. Many of our competitors are subsidiaries or the brokerage arm of conglomerates. So, this independence keeps us free from conflict of interests and similar issues. And because this is all we do, risk management and insurance consulting, we have to be good because we're not engaged in other kinds of trades and businesses.

I understand that you have identified operating principles such as partnership, "one company, one team," change, accountability, growth, community commitment and technology. Are these part of your corporate philosophy?

Zandueta: Yes, these are part of our global corporate philosophy. You can be assured that all Marsh operating units are strictly adhering to these operating principles.

When we talk about partnership, we make sure that we work with clients, colleagues and the market in really beneficial partnerships. In dealing with markets and clients, we make sure that no one is put at a disadvantage. The basic principle is we always look at a win-win situation for all the participants, for all the parties concerned. We serve clients with our total global resources, including those of Marsh and McLennan companies.

We discuss this a lot. We basically follow the same operating principles, objectives, as one company. We are global but act local. For example, Marsh always wants to hire a local as head of their business operations in a certain country. David (Jacob), of course, is an American citizen, but he grew up here. In Hong Kong for instance, the operation is headed by a Hong Kong national. In Singapore, it's the same thing and so on. The strategy is that whenever possible, we utilize a local team for that particular country.

On change, we don't change just for the sake of changing. We only pursue change when it benefits our clients and the firm. On the other hand, we pursue accountability, we make sure that we always have our objectives, plans. There are mechanisms, a set of performance evaluation standards that we strictly adhere to.

In terms of growth, we are, of course, obligated to generate revenues for the company, for the benefit of shareholders. In the community, we're very active in this as a local company. We actually have supported two charitable institutions. One is the American Chamber Foundation, where we have been actively involved for the past 10 years. We've been supporting their projects. And we are also supporting the Ronald McDonald House of Charity, which helps indigent children to have a better future.

In so far as technology is concerned, we're so committed to this. We have received prestigious awards from the Smithsonian Institute and Computer Web Magazine. We have a web-based service called the In-mind, which our clients can access through the Internet The basic requirement is you have to be enrolled for you to be able to access that site. We have created what we call a virtual office, where, if your account executive is currently unavailable, you can easily access your computer and see all the information that you want.

Jacob: Let me add to the accountability issue. This is something that differentiates us as opposed to going direct to insurance companies. When we say accountability, we're on the line when we represent a client We tell them, "We are representing you so should anything bad happen based on what we're providing, we are accountable." We really pride ourselves on our professional approach to handling services for our clients because we know that if at any given moment we somehow make a mistake, our whole group is going to be accountable for that.

What's the ranking of Marsh in the industry in the Philippines?

Legaspi: We're number 2 locally. But you have to consider that we do not have any "captive" accounts We are not part of a local conglomerate wherein we could generate other revenues.

Jacob: But we're the largest in the world. We are ranked number one globally in terms of revenues generated.

You have identified core values of the company. Please tell us something about these.

Legaspi: Our core values are giving value to clients and colleagues, innovation, excellence, openness and integrity. For our clients, we have an account management process wherein we sit down with a client, ask them about their needs and wants. We prepare a tailored-fit program and upon approval, undertake implementation with a corresponding action plan and timetable. At the end of the day, we have a report card. We are graded on how we have provided service—whether we were efficient or there were areas that we neglected.

In terms of excellence, we have professional standards. We operate under strict operating procedures and standards that Marsh employees would have to adhere to. We talk about quality of work, efficiency On openness and integrity, we are very conscious that we have to conduct our business ethically. We always emphasize transparency to our clients—be it the market that we use or how we came about with the program and how we would be implementing it.

What are your secrets to working effectively as a team?

Guy: We complement each other. We have different backgrounds and specialties that work together We also cascade this team spirit to other members of the team.

Jacob: We are all young, very aggressive. Everybody has a lot of fun. Our employee turnover (which is low) is excellent over the last three to four years. We have maintained our core staff even in the face of heavy pirating by competitors. We have managed to keep our people intact.

Zandueta: We encourage an atmosphere of openness. All the staff here can approach anybody so they don't have to go through channels. If they have a problem or if they want to see the chief executive about a problem, his door is always open. Everybody's door is always open. We don't practice a strict hierarchical setup where you can't talk to another person unless you go through your immediate boss. Everything is open. We are very transparent, we don't entertain intrigues.

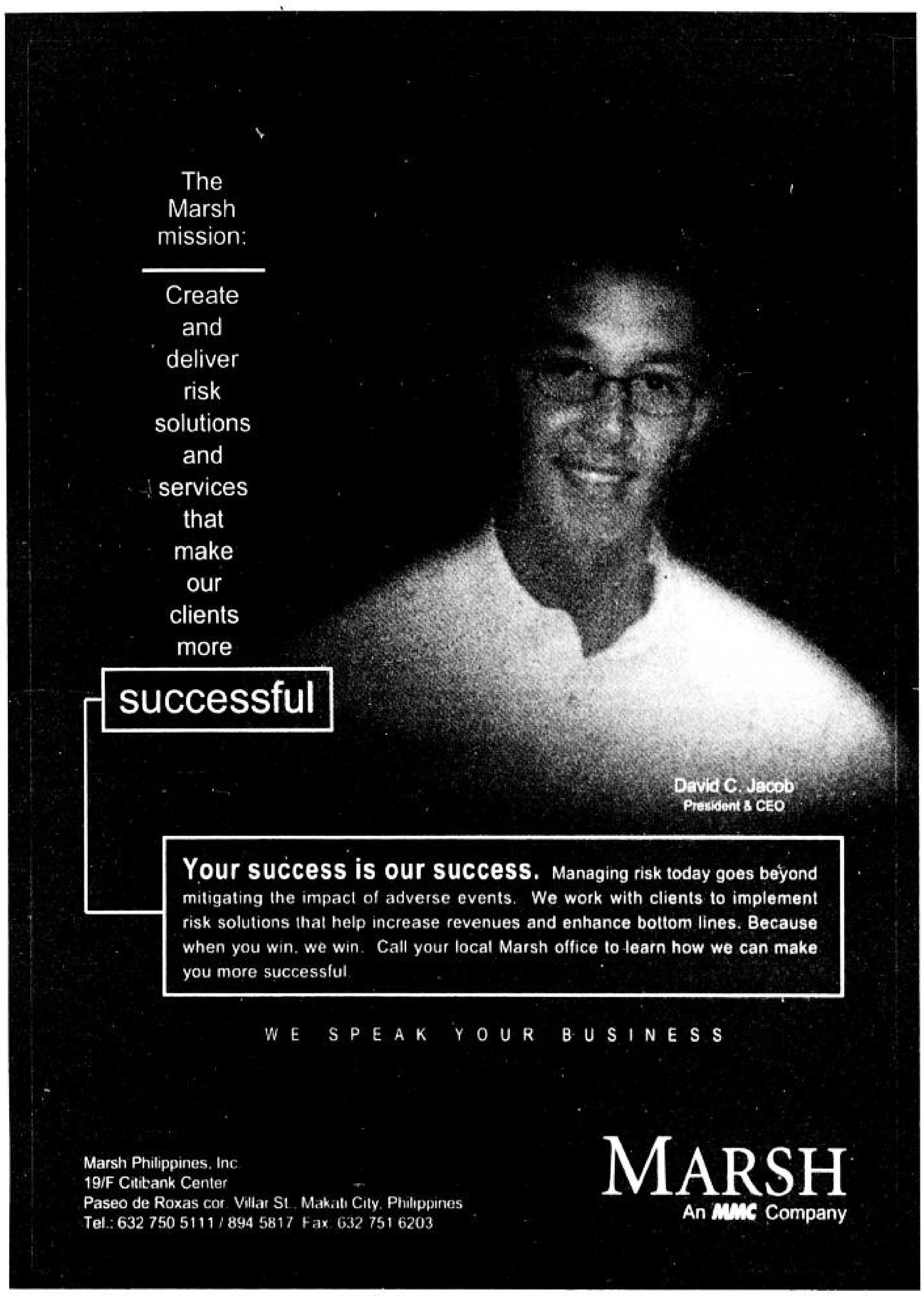
Legaspi: There is a saying that you are as good as the people you work with. I think everyone here is proud of the people we work with. If anybody needs to confer with or get advice from someone, everyone is supportive. It's the culture here. This makes this workplace a very exciting place.

Zandueta: We have an activity here wherein everybody gets a chance to have breakfast with the President. It is where they can air their ideas on a regular basis.

Jacob: Everybody has an active role with how we fare in the market. We introduce innovative concept themes wherein everybody in the room contributes to a brainstorming session. We don't keep it to upper management to steer the company. We really get everybody involved. That's the atmosphere here—there is an energy here that makes them feel they are part of something.

Legaspi: It would be very difficult for us to impart to our clients the expertise, principles and objectives Marsh as a company adheres to if we ourselves are not remarkably impressed with the standards of our products, services and more so, the quality of people we work with. But the fact is, we are.

Plan: Marsh is a company that exists not solely for the purpose of generating income. Obviously we have to meet our financial and profitability targets and satisfy our clients requirements. But equally important, we have to maintain an atmosphere of professionalism, where each individual is provided with opportunities to reach his or her full potential.



The Marsh mission:
Create and deliver risk solutions and services that make our clients more successful

David C. Jacob
President & CEO

Your success is our success. Managing risk today goes beyond mitigating the impact of adverse events. We work with clients to implement risk solutions that help increase revenues and enhance bottom lines. Because when you win, we win. Call your local Marsh office to learn how we can make you more successful.

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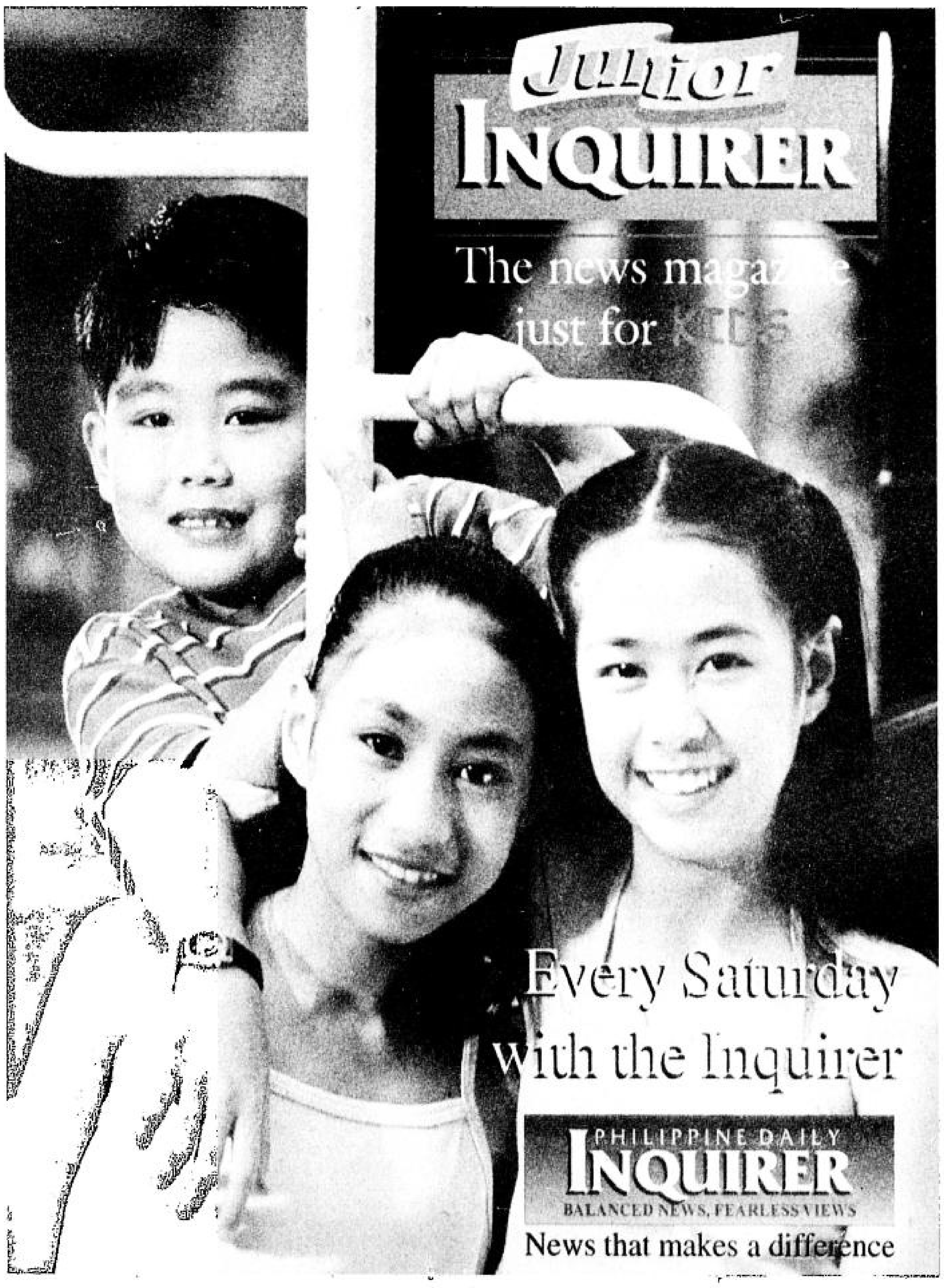

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Learning is her recipe for success

By Cecile G. Garcia

CAREER*Tales*

MOST probably, Moje Ramos-Aquino's strongest point is her willingness to learn. This trait, according to her, must have determined her career path and continues to make her want to explore new things everyday.

Aquino has been a human resource and organization development practitioner for more than 20 years. Asked about her particular specialty she replies, "I have gone through the whole gamut of HR. I have done everything, from labor relations to personnel administration." Her claim is supported by an impressive list of clients, some of which are, Hayakawa Electronics, International Rice Research Institute, First Phil. Holdings, Malayan Group of Companies, Bank of Commerce, Land Bank, Midas Kapiti International, Monark Equipment, Adamson University and Clark Development Corporation. Aquino heads her own consulting firm, Paradigms & Paradoxes Consultants.

Established

"I have a staff of 12 consultants and three employees. I have to find clients in order to maintain them," quips Aquino. Though she does not market actively, getting clients is not as difficult as it should be. For her clientele, Aquino relies mostly on her network. Having been president of the Phil. Society for Training and Development (PSTD) and the Asia-Pacific Regional Training & Development Organization (ARTDO), Aquino has established herself and is generally known in HR circles. "What's important is, we have something good we want to share," she says.

Lately, she says, HR consultancy practice has become competitive. "There are quite a number of us now," observes Aquino. "There are even those who sideline or moonlight as HR specialists and the sad part is that some of them are not really qualified."

When she was starting out, recalls Aquino, HR was far from what it is today. "It was more or less limited to personnel administration. There were no training courses, no seminars and workshops," she says. This is no longer true because we not only have training programs on HR, it is now being offered as a college course by schools like San Beda and the University of Sto. Tomas.

Hard way

In her salad days, however, Aquino was pretty much on her own and she had to learn the hard way. A graduate of business administration from the University of the East, Aquino evolved into an expert in a field she never thought she'd discover, explore and love. "It was not something planned. But when I found it, I knew I wanted to pursue it. It was where my heart belonged."

Aquino's love affair with HR began when she was working as personnel supervisor at Resins Inc. Because she had trained earlier with the International Labor Organization (ILO), she was assigned to lecture on family planning. "It was purely lecture and it was strictly for company personnel," she recalls.

Aquino loved it and she must have been good because that particular stint signaled the start of an arbitrary career that was destined to be a lifelong passion. "After that, my classmates at the ILO workshop I attended started inviting me to give talks at the companies where they worked. I used to lecture on topics related to HR."

Following Resins, Aquino joined Bataan Pulp and Paper Mills, Inc. as personnel manager. Later on, she worked with Philippine Airlines as finance administration manager. "Then, I asked to be transferred to training," she says. At this point, she realized she wanted to concentrate on HR. It wasn't long after that she put up her own practice in 1997.

Foundation

At present, Aquino conducts seminars and workshops, and provides consultancy services on planning, teambuilding, values and attitudes, management and leadership, communication, career planning and development, marketing management and other related areas.

Being a competent HR practitioner takes training, skills and determination. It also takes time. It can't happen overnight. "First of all, you need a good foundation. You need to be schooled formally on the basics," opines Aquino. "You need communication skills and a knack for getting on with people. If you can't take a full course on HR, then take short courses continuously. You also have to read endlessly on the subject."

Aquino goes on to say that besides the willingness to learn, other personal attributes have contributed as well to her success in the field of human resource. There is, for instance, her openness to sharing what she knows. Moreover, Aquino is creative and never judgmental. She is forgiving of herself and of others. Last but not the least, she possesses a sense of humor

Sense of humor

A sense of humor, avers Aquino, can take you through trying times. "A perfect example is when people pick your brain, steal your ideas later and do the program themselves. They ask for a proposal and materials, then, they don't hire you." Ever upbeat, Aquino is nonetheless happy because others are able to make use of her ideas.

AQUINO'S faces of success.

A former professor at San Beda College, Aquino derives utmost satisfaction from teaching or sharing what she knows. "What I enjoy most is seeing the participants in a seminar or workshop I am conducting, happy. I am always satisfied knowing that I have contributed to making them better employees and better persons."

Though some would say that being in HR is a shortcut to getting rich, as far as Aquino is concerned, money is not a motivation. Admittedly, she finds the profession immensely fulfilling. "Not because of material gain," she asserts, "but because what I do enriches me as a person and makes me grow. This is one reason why I like projects such as Caritas and Pro Life."

In schools, Aquino continues, where the participants are teachers and professors, one can imagine the extent, the magnitude of the impact of HR-related programs, because these teachers and professors in turn impart and pass on whatever they learn to students. Aquino services colleges and universities for a minimum fee.

Inspiration

Aquino claims she draws inspiration from her two sons, ages 23 and 21. She says she has a fascination for books and plants. Every nook and corner of her house, according to her, is crammed with books. The house itself is surrounded by a garden abundant with lush trees and plants.

In 1998, Aquino had to undergo surgery for cancer. "It was a turning point," she says. Faced with her own mortality, she realized everything earthly is borrowed and death can come any time "It was then I became more vocal about my faith." Aquino believes she owes her recovery first to God and second to the care and love of her family and friends and third to her wonderful and gifted surgeon, Dr. Michael Carandang of the Lourdes Hospital.

Aquino finds that there is endless challenge in her work. "A constant challenge is being innovative in training methods. Another one is how to be not only better skilled but also more well-rounded as a trainor." The approach, she adds, should be multi-dimensional and holistic.

"I would like to practice for another 10 years," Aquino says of her plans. After that, she would like to retire in a farm and "really do farming." She would also like to write a book—"about my experiences and what I have learned from the people in my life."

(To mark People at Work's first year anniversary, Moje Ramos-Aquino will be conducting for free a seminar on "Assertiveness in Communication" on May 29, 2001. To register, call 897-8808 local 554 or e-mail peopleatwork@inquirer.com.ph.*)*

Education is key to workplace productivity

By Ernie O. Cecilia

WHEN I was young, we were so poor that my parents could not even sustain my elementary education. My father told me that he would only pay for my entry into Grade I in a public school. I should then strive to top the class every year so that we wouldn't have to pay for my tuition fee for the succeeding grade. Otherwise, I would have to drop out from school. I was glad I heeded my father's advice. I overcame my greatest handicap—poverty—and got the schooling and education I needed to fight our poverty.

Today, I always advise the youth that continuing education (not necessarily schooling) is their guarantee against poverty and ignorance.

However, the realities are harsh. When then can the youth do to ensure that they get the education and thereafter the opportunity to progress that they need? Here are a few tips.

1. Have a dream.

If you are not happy where you are, dare to dream of what and where you want to be. You cannot have a dream come true unless you first have a dream. You cannot be where you want to be unless you move from where you are now.

Be specific about your dream. Have a vision of the kind of future you want to have. Visualize what you are doing when you have achieved your dream. Play that vision in your mind as often as you can, and believe in it. Want that dream so much, so that everything you will do must lead you towards that dream.

The Bible tells us that "people perish without vision."

2. Know what it takes to achieve that dream.

It is not enough to have a dream. Know what you need to do to achieve that dream. Look at successful people and make them your models. Find out what values, attitudes, knowledge, education, training, skills and competencies they have. Talk to them, read about them, and find out from people close to them the secrets of their success.

Then, make a plan to pursue your dream. Work hard at acquiring the values, education, and competencies that will help you achieve that dream. Focus all your energies in making your dream come true. Do more than just wish that your dream come true. Take positive action that leads to positive results.

Constantly ask yourself, "Is this thing that I am doing now going to lead me to my dream?" If yes, move on vigorously. If not, stop and rethink what you need to do to keep you back on the right track. Don't even let failure distract you. Also, never leave anything to chance.

3. Get the right education.

Every year, around 350,000 new college graduates join the workforce, in addition to the same number of youngsters reaching the working age without the benefit of college education. Getting your dream job is a competitive task. In fact, 4 million jobless Filipinos can confirm that. Ten million more underemployed Filipinos are possibly competing for your dream job.

What's your guarantee that you will have an edge? Getting the right education is a good first step. Know the skills that will be needed in the new workplace over the long term and enroll in the right course—in school or in seminars. Even if you graduate summa cum laude in Journalism, you might not get the job that requires a two-year course in Computer-Based Bookkeeping.

It takes more than luck to get the right job or career. There is no substitute for preparation. First, get the right education for your dream job, then maybe Lady Luck will smile at you.

4. Don't let schooling interfere with your education.

The classroom is not the only venue for learning. The best form of training is on-the-job training. The best form of development is self-development. Life itself is a big classroom.

I once conducted a spot survey among new entrants in the workplace. I asked them a simple question, "What percentage of what you learned in school did you use at work?" Most of the respondents admitted using not more than 20 percent of what they learned in school and that they needed to train on the job to be able to transition from the academe to the real workplace. Despite this, strive to have a good college education. Pursue graduate and post-graduate studies, if you can.

Don't limit your learning opportunities to the confines of the classroom. Learn as much as you can from day to day interaction with other people. Develop and strengthen your character and the values that will help you achieve your dreams and aspirations.

5. Don't stop learning.

Take every opportunity to add to the stock of knowledge that you now have. One can never learn enough or too much. There's always something new to learn everyday. When you think you know all the answers, you might wake up one day to find that somebody has changed all the questions. This is happening in the new workplace because of globalization and information technology. Let's heed the advice of Confucius, "Acquire new knowledge whilst thinking over the old, and you may become a teacher of others."

Learn not only from your teacher or mentor. You can learn from fellow students as well. In fact, teachers learn from their students, too. Ralph Waldo Emerson reminds us that "You send your child to the schoolmaster, but 'tis the schoolboys who educate him."

As the business of doing business changes, so will the demands of the workplace for new skills and competencies. In the new workplace, he who rests rusts. The real security comes from the ability to develop and hone the skills that will help you create value that customers will be willing to pay for.

Continuing learning and education help employees to be competitive in the job market. Jobs provide livelihood and alleviate poverty.

Truly, education is an important component in a nation's competitiveness in the global market. An educated workforce, together with infrastructure and business climate suitable for business, can make our country a choice location for foreign investments.

EDUCATION
POVE?T
ILLUSTRATION BY STEPH BRAVO

Meeting monster devours time, money

By Kent R. Davies

EVERYONE complains about meetings, but few give serious consideration to proactively controlling their wanton proliferation. We often attend them like lemmings accomplishing little more than the equivalent of jumping off a high cliff. Keep in mind that effective managers don't measure their days by their length, but by how intensively they have managed their time.

Meetings devour your two most valuable resources: time and money. Unproductive meetings are not only frustrating to sit through, they also steal your competitive edge. Only the fortunate few don't feel overwhelmed and frustrated.

Useful

Meetings can grease the wheels of progress or simply protect your turf. They're useful at disseminating information while generating pertinent feedback. Meetings can also achieve unanimity of purpose when making organizational changes, for instance, while generating camaraderie through everyone's active participation. Even with what well-run meetings can accomplish, it's a distressing fact of life that in day-to-day reality, they're often a gigantic waste of time, money, and energy.

It's not uncommon for executives to devote over 70 percent of their day to meetings. A Heldrick & Struggles survey found 18 percent of chief executive officers spending over 30 hours per week in meetings, and an additional 25 percent devoting 20 to 29 hours each week to meetings.

Consider the time meetings consume yearly. If you devote 75 percent of your time to attending meetings and only work a 40-hour week, you'll be in meetings almost 1,600 hours a year. That's quite a chunk of your valuable time, as well as needless wear and tear on both your psyche and posterior. If you eliminate 25 percent of those meetings, you'd have 400 more hours a year to meet your goals.

Meetings aren't cheap. Without strong leadership and an agenda, meetings can easily wander to unexpected and costly directions. A manufacturing executive's experience vividly illustrates this common affliction. A high level meeting was called to consider a major corporate restructuring. Certainly such a far-reaching agenda item would command everyone's strict attention. The 18 well-paid executives present, however, soon maneuvered the discussion into a 90-minute caucus over selecting an upcoming office party's entrees. The executive figured the organization's outlay for this non-agenda item came to an expensive $2,200.

When estimating employee value, the true cost is not, as commonly accepted, just salary plus benefits. A more accurate costing is the revenue contribution rate. For instance, a regional sales representative working ten hours per day with an annual sales goal of five million dollars should value her time as five million dollars divided by 2,000 work hours per year which equals $2,500 per hour. Therefore, her four-hour meeting is not just costing the company her salary and benefits, but $10,000 in lost opportunity costs that could have been better spent generating new business. The revenue contribution rate puts a new perspective on each meeting's true cost/benefit. Although not all meetings should be valued from this perspective, the revenue contribution rate provides a sobering perspective on a meeting's true costs.

One of the ironclad laws of meetings is that the more people attending a meeting, the longer it invariably lasts. Meetings with 10 or more participants, for example, tend to quickly digress from their formal agendas and run much longer than estimated. It's not unusual to see projected two-hour meetings drag on all day as everyone feels a need to put his or her two-cents in.

Not everyone is losing money over meeting mania with consultants being richly rewarded for ministering to our collective anguish. Unfortunately, consultants commonly direct their efforts towards increasing meeting efficiency without first passing on the knowledge to strategically gauge a meeting's necessity.

Strategic approach

If you want to save your time and your organization's money, start making strategic decisions about which meetings are really necessary.

Most meetings aren't as necessary as generally believed. A Wharton Center for Applied Research survey discovered that senior managers found only 58 percent of their meetings productive while 22 percent of their meetings could have been more efficiently handled over the phone or with a memo. For middle managers the findings were 54 percent and 29 percent respectively.

The key to conquering the meeting monster is first deciding what decisions can be independently implemented, and which ones can't. When first considering a meeting's necessity, ask yourself its purpose and scope. If you're meeting to decide your organization's Internet presence, for instance, more than a few meetings are obviously necessary. If the issue is the hallway's new color scheme, you can unilaterally make that decision with little or no outside input; so make the decision, and move on. If you can accept responsibility when a decision goes awry or you can get the information you need on a one-to-one basis, you have the wherewithal to start eliminating up to half your meetings.

When you need input from your colleagues, phone them or send e-mail to generate their input. Don't waste their time having discussions of little or no relevance to them. They'll appreciate you for it, and you'll enjoy a real advantage when your competitors are stuck in "meeting analysis paralysis" while you're out doing your job. Your radical ideas on meetings will make you a winner.

Tactics

Save your valuable time by developing strategies to provide your input at meetings without your presence. When invited to a meeting ask the convener the meeting's purpose and why you're being included. If your input is required, see if a colleague can cover for you, or ensure your input through memos or phone calls to the key players. Often a short one-on-one confab beforehand with a meeting's organizer is sufficient.

Don't sit through long meetings when only one ten-minute agenda item is relevant to your goals. Inform the convener that you can only attend the portion relevant to you.

When attending meetings that drag on with little relevance to the agenda tactfully refocus the discussion by suggesting "Not to interrupt, but we need to keep to the agenda." If this doesn't work, the only solution may be to end the meeting, and determine what needs to be done to make the next meeting more productive.

If your subordinates want to involve you in a roundtable meeting to help them develop solutions to a problem, tell them to include you when they've discussed the problem, and developed viable alternatives for your consideration. This puts the responsibility back with your subordinates while alerting them to more efficiently utilize your time.

Go out of your way at meetings to praise your subordinates or colleagues who utilize efficient meeting tactics. Make heroes of everyone who uses your time efficiently and soon your less efficient colleagues and subordinates will get the message.

Eternal vigilance

You might want to try an experiment the next time you're thinking about calling a meeting and decide against it. Send a short memo to everyone you would have invited, and tell them that a meeting won't be convened since you'll unilaterally decide the issue. Calculate the money and time this non-meeting saved everyone. The message will be clear that non-meetings can be very, very productive. With luck, your idea might spread.

Even if you first succeed in cutting down your meeting time, never forget that meetings are a fearless and relentless foe. If you let your guard down even for a minute, meetings start proliferating like wildfire and you'll soon be firmly back in the monster's claws. Eternal vigilance is the only answer.

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Yuppie reflects on Edsa 3

(From page B16)

people are formed in gospel values. They need to believe that the gospel is true. They experience the joy of giving: "give and you shall receive."

The economy of sharing has become the subject of study of competent economists worldwide who are watching closely the development of its theory and practice. Schools of formation will soon rise that will allow interested individuals to learn more about the economy of sharing. Lectures on the unique concept have been given to students of business at UST and at the Ateneo.

Over 800 enterprises all over the world form the backbone of this new economy. In Brazil and Argentina, industrial zones have been founded based on the economy of sharing. In brief, this is what the economy of sharing is all about. Should you be interested, I can refer you to responsible people who can share you more ideas about it. Meantime, do what you can. See with your friends what you can do. Let us all pray that political stability is restored quickly in our country to give us time and energy to help the poor in concrete ways.

(Ms. Puangco is CEO and president of Ancilla Enterprise Development Consulting, a full service management consulting firm which offers a helping hand to leaders, people and enterprises as they plan and implement learning and business solutions that address complex change towards sustainable growth. Send comments, feedback or requests for advice through e-mail to ancillaedc@pacific.net.ph *or fax to tel. no. 892-2902.)*

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PEOPLE at WORK

RAUL O. MARCELO, Editor ■ REGINA GALANG REYES, Subsection Editor

Yuppie reflects on Edsa 3

PHOTO BY JOAN BONDOC

CONFRONTATION between police and pro-Erap demonstrators in front of Malacañang's Gate 7.

BY TITA DATU PUANGCO

THE PAST weekend was very stressful for me as I saw on television Edsa 3 and how poor people were exploited and manipulated to serve selfish ends of politicians. I also realized that it has opened a Pandora's box, in terms of the presence of so many poor people around us, especially in urban areas. To be honest with you, I was quite shaken.

I am a 32-year old guy, living a comfortable upper middle class existence, working with a good salary for a multinational company. I live in a nice flat in a condominium building and drive a fancy car. I feel guilty knowing that a great number of our countrymen remain poor. But can I really do anything, considering the size of the problem of poverty? My friends say, it is mainly a government problem. How can a person like me help? I remember coming across your article after Edsa 2 where you mentioned about the economy of sharing. Tell me more about it.

Multinational Employee

If Edsa 3 was a strong wake-up call for you and the other more fortunate members of our society, then we can count on this as one positive consequence. This event can spur in all of us, a renewal, a more decisive move to help alleviate the plight of the poor among us. What we have to guard against is our Filipino *ningas cogon* attitude, that makes us feel intensely about events, but after the emotion and the passion are spent, we go back to our self-centered existence.

Advice

FOR THE ANXIOUS PERSON AT WORK

Simple lifestyle

We know that the problems of poverty are complex. But this should not prevent us from doing what we can. In an article I wrote after EDSA 2, I mentioned some of the actions one can pursue at a personal level. One is to go for voluntary simplicity by not going along the current of consumerism. Consumerism means buying everything in sight including non-essentials because you have the purchasing power. Simplicity of lifestyle allows one to have excess resources that can be put at the service of others.

Then, you can look for a poor relative in your family who may not have the resources to go to school and try to understand what he needs to study. Or you can interview your helper at home and ask if he or she wants to pursue further studies. You may have a neighbor who just lost his job. Offer to refer him to your network of friends and help him find another job. I am a believer in focusing on action you can control and influence rather than worry about the bigger reality of which you don't have control.

I agree with you that the problem is not the concern of government alone. It is everybody's concern. But we all know that a modest estimate of government resources that go to graft and corruption is from 30 to 40 percent of the budget. You can imagine how much further this amount would go if it is sincerely used to finance projects that truly help the poor. This makes it imperative for all of us to vote wisely. We know that our political structure is flawed and patronage politics is the name of the game. But as of now let us try to work within the system. Let us put into office the individuals who can rise above petty political loyalties to serve the common good. Only if we are able to achieve unity and develop consensus on how to tackle the problem of poverty can we move forward.

In the book the "The Long Boom," the authors built a scenario of global prosperity. But they were quick to mention that countries that cannot set their politics straight will be left behind in poverty and underdevelopment. At this point, our politicians need to spend more time anticipating the downside of globalization. With the major Philippine markets for electronics in a slowdown, how do we cushion people who will be displaced by this downturn?

The private sector or as is now popularly called, "civil society," can help. But if you want to do something more and "be more," let me talk to you about the economy of sharing. This is a concept and project launched by Chiara Lubich, the foundress of the Focolare, a lay church movement. Chiara Lubich a few years back received a doctorate in theology honoris causa from the University of Santo Tomas. Her concept is one outstanding example of a concrete way of addressing poverty that dignifies both the people who give and the people who receive help.

Chiara Lubich visited Brazil in 1991. She was struck by the presence of "favelas" or squatter areas around the glistening, tall skyscrapers of San Paolo in Brazil, a situation very similar to Metro Manila. She likened them to the crown of thorns of Christ around the city. She understood that as Christians, we cannot simply shake our heads and not do anything.

Economy of sharing

She launched the "economy of sharing" movement (EOS movement) to contrast the liberal capitalist view of an "economy of having." She urged the members of the movement with the resources and competence to set up business enterprises. It did not matter whether these were small or large or simply economic activities.

Unlike traditional enterprises, the profits of the enterprise did not go to the shareholders. Profits were put instead for helping the poor, forming people in gospel values and for the continuing growth of the enterprise.

This project caught like wild fire in the Focolare Movement that is present in 170 countries. Today, a number of these enterprises exist in the Philippines. The enterprises compete actively in the open market just like any other enterprise. Some enterprise owners decided to link up their traditional business to the economy of sharing.

Chiara Lubich focuses on the spiritual foundation needed for the birth of said enterprises. She notes that "they have to be the work of God, not just exclusively human activity, simply fruits of gifted people." She believes that a culture of giving is needed. She said that giving is not "difficult, arduous or heroic because the human being who is made in the image of God finds fulfillment precisely in loving, in giving". It is in the deepest core of every person.

Culture of giving

This culture of giving must be the attitude when serving the poor in a manner that respects one's dignity as a child of God. It also pervades the way the enterprises are run so that they enable those who work in them and respect their dignity. The Focolare Movement has social centers that serve poor communities, with competence and compassion. Every client is a person deserving of respect, not simply a number or statistic. The profits of enterprises help support some of the expenses incurred in running said centers. The centers manned by fulltime staff and volunteers help develop the poor in integrated and holistic ways. These centers are found in Pasay, Tagaytay, Cebu and Davao.

The EOS forms new men and women. Lay people must sanctify themselves where they are in the world, whatever their profession or work. Her belief is that the continuing spread of the economy of sharing is made possible only when

YUPPIE/B15

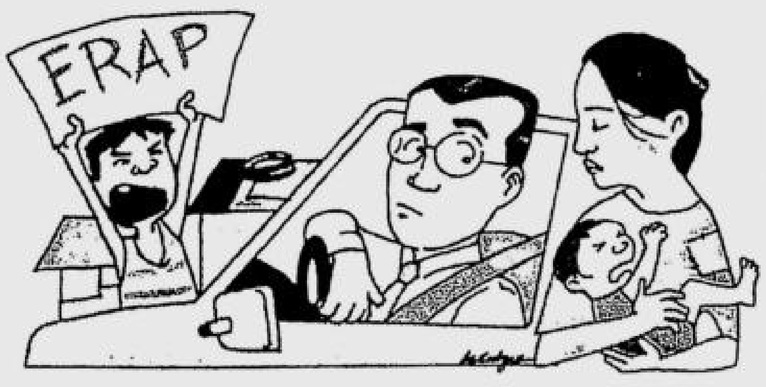

ILLUSTRATION BY ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

You are how you spend your time

SOME people are merely marking time here on earth. Some are serving time for some offense committed against the state or the society or fellow human beings. Some are doing this not physically but in their conscience (which is more difficult). Still some are really making hay and living it up. What about you?

Time is a great equalizer. Everybody has the same 24 hours a day no matter if you are rich or poor, if you take a bath everyday or not, if you lied or not, if you led a rebellion or not, if you are kind as a person or a user, if you are in EDSA 2 or EDSA *Puwersa*, if you are jobless or an executive in Makati, if you eat three square meals a day or you hardly know where and when the next meal is coming, if you own a Nokia or an Alcatel cellphone, if you watch channel 2 or channel 7 or channel 25, if you claim to be a "*mahirap*" living in Forbes Park or Dasmariñas Village or Ayala Alabang, if you are poor and want to wallow in it and use it as an excuse for not doing anything about your lot, if you have no care at all and you are simply living your own life quietly in your little corner of this world.

Time flies

Twenty-four hours—that's all we have each day. And whether we use it or not, it disappears just like that. It doesn't wait for any one or when we are ready. At this juncture, you've already used one minute and 5 seconds reading this column. Do you know that in that same amount of time 520 million blood cells have died within you, the wings of a small hummingbird has beat 4,550 times, the sun has traveled 11,050 miles in its orbit and the earth, 1,192.5 miles? Do you know that it takes a mere one minute for the brain of a newborn baby to grow one to two milligrams and for your heart to pump 12 gallons of blood during a period of physical exertion or stress? Multiply these by 24 hours.

And what have you been doing with your own time, the portion of your time that you can control? And this is really 24 hours save for those times where there are natural events like storms and earthquakes and the like. Also outside your control are those that are mandated such as a stoplight, office hours, etc. Do I hear you say, "But my boss always controls my time! He wants me to do this and do that. And my boss practices Russian style of management. Rush *ito*, rush *iyan*! And when I get home, ugh! I need to attend to a thousand and one household chores. I have to tutor the children."

Current state

Think again, what have you been doing with your own time, the times that are within your control? Everything! Everything that you want to do and more!

RECIPES*for* LEARNING

By Moje Ramos-Aquino

Guided by our past columns, you listed down hour-by-hour, day-to-day, where your time goes. Then, you classified your different activities and behaviors under the significant chunks of your life: career/business, family, spiritual, social responsibility, relational, personal, circular file. Also, you identified the number of hours you spent for each of these activities and major chunks of your life, the feelings that you had when you were experiencing or doing those things, and the patterns in your life that are now becoming obvious and visible to your conscious mind.

Having done that, you have identified your current state of your life. You see habits. You see your so-called priorities or what are really important to you. You see what makes you happy or sad, angry or glad, anxious or calm. You see the people who are important in your life or who merely happen to be there. You see where your money goes. You see what you really only need in terms of material things. You see the gaps and overlaps, the useful and useless, the productive and wasteful, the helpful and the burdensome, the clutter and the important.

Tips

How you spend your time is how you spend your life. What comes to mind is this stanza from a favorite poet, Robert Herrick, from my high school days:

"Gather ye rosebuds while ye may,
Old time is still a-flying:
And this same flower that smiles today,
Tomorrow will be dying."

Starting next week, in this our Workshop on How to Use Time and Come up the Winner in this Game called Life and Enjoy It Tremendously, we shall give you tips on getting the most out of your time and life. Meantime, please spend some quiet time by yourself, and then later join your Learning Buddies for an open, honest discussion of the following:

- Review of your Personal Vision, Mission, Values and Big Life Goals (PVMVBLG)
- Review of your Personal Objectives and Action Plans
- Assessment of your current resources, e.g. competencies (knowledge, skills, values and attitudes), financial, network of friends and business alliances, support mechanisms (family, friends, etc.), others
- Assessment of your current use of time and how they relate to your achievement of your (PVMVBLG)
- Your fantasies and dreams (apart from your PVMVBLG)
- Your strengths and weaknesses
- Your threats and opportunities

This shouldn't be hard because you have already done this in our previous Workshops and you have all these data written down in your reflection notebook. *O, di ba?*

ASTD updates

At ASTD 2001, you will find high quality sessions, wide scope and top-level speakers and management gurus. When you attend ASTD 2001 in Orlando, Florida, this June 3-7, you will be able to choose from 250 sessions and six Conferences-within-a-Conference events and get answers to these questions and many more:

- How can you create a culture that attracts and retains the best and the brightest?
- What can we do to build, keep and regain trust?
- How are organizations really using e-learning?
- How can you reinvent training to address recruitment and retention?
- What role should the CEO and the executive team play in career development and corporate education?
- How can you connect virtual teams who may not even speak the same language or work in he same time zone?

On the Expo floor, more than 550 companies are signed up to exhibit. Watch also the latest training video on Silverscreen. If you want to connect with people who can create a climate where innovation thrives, consider the Convergence Conference being held June 3-5 at the Disney Institute. It is unlike anything ASTD has offered before and attendance is limited.

Call Paradigms & Paradoxes Consultants, the ASTD Official Delegation Organizer here in the Philippines, at 715-9332 and Adrian or Jenny will happily give you other details.

(E-mail feedback to moje.ramos@aquino.com.ph*)*

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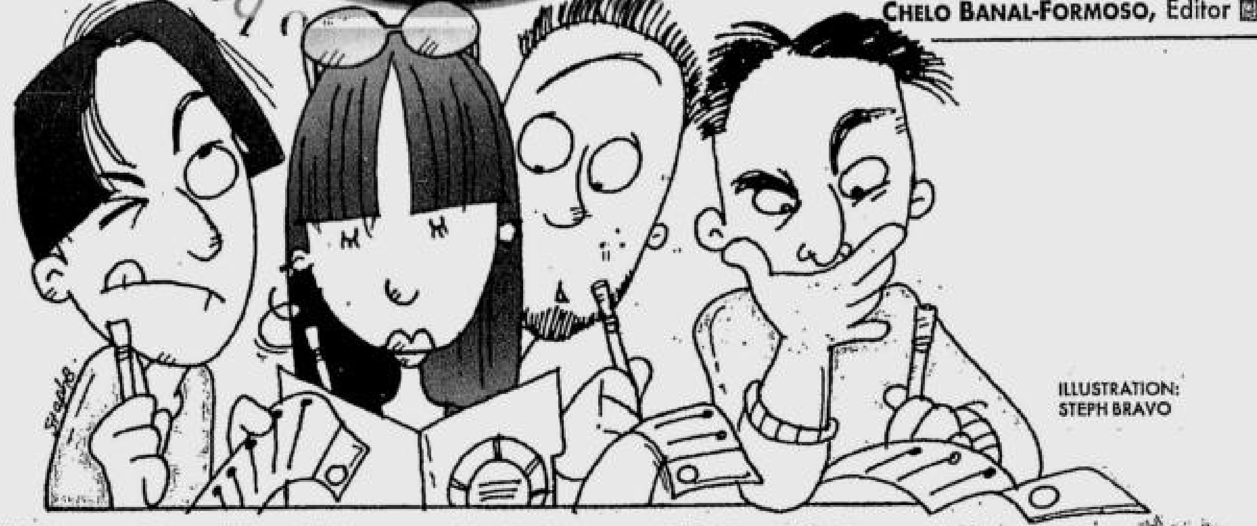

ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

BALLOT POWER

Posters are everywhere. Election ads are all over. It's crazy out there. You know what's a good advice to heed on Election Day? Don't get mad, get even. Weed the thieves, the incompetents and the liars out of government through your vote. We at 2bU! will use our ballots to make things right. Will you?

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GLOBE TELECOM Business Center

Who would you never vote for?

EVEN months before the elections, never-ending polls and surveys have been conducted. Who will everyone vote for? Who's at the top? We all know who the favorites are. This time, 2bU! crosses that line and asks an all-important question: Even if you were tied to a tree and tortured, whose name would never appear on your ballot? Who would you never vote for?

Puwersa ng Masa senatoriables, Judas Escariots of the times.—**Caloy, 24**

Miriam. I think she's lost it. I don't want someone who's crazy, insensitive and a liar!—**Alex, 21, UST**

People with no *paninindigan, balimbing, walang isang salita*.—**Carlos Agassi**

Ping Lacson and Miriam.—**Anne**

All the irresponsible and sinister candidates that created and nurtured the monster in Edsa and Mendiola.—**GP, 26**

Miriam Defensor because she's obviously fallen on her head too many f---ing times.—**Quark Henares, 20**

Miriam—that split personality is a no!—**Baby Ruth Villarama, 21**

I will never ever vote for Loi Estrada because she epitomizes a "martyr" who tolerates a philandering husband. She brings shame to womanpower. She's a disappointment.—**Bubbles, 19**

I'll never vote for Miriam Santiago. She's a liar. Why didn't she jump off the plane?—**Grace Robleza**

Miriam. She's a f---ing liar.—**Powiewie, 16**

Miriam Santiago. Her undying support for Estrada doesn't guarantee her a seat in the Senate. She's a pathological liar and a traditional politician. She forgot her promise about jumping off the plano. I used to admire her because she's the epitome of womanpower but she's gone mad.—**Jakyry, 20**

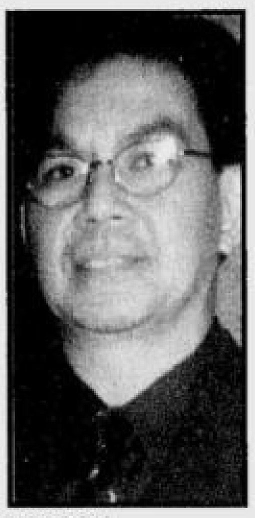
Miriam and Enrile. I just don't want people who side with someone just because they can use his power for their personal interest. And I hate their arrogant attitude.—**Neil**

Miriam. She has ways of twisting the truth that has instigated fury and manipulated the poor. We don't want a sore lunatic in the Senate once more, do we?—**Anne, 20**

Mayor Benhur Abalos of Mandaluyong. Mandaluyong is a rich city yet it's ugly and dirty. The Erap senators—they had their chance. Their loyalty is not to the people but their friend/master Erap. What our government needs are politicians with no self-serving interest. We need people who belong to the people.

I'll never vote for Kiko Pangilinan. He's trying too hard to be a politician—but he doesn't seem to be at ease in that field. What our country needs are leaders, not bosses. Public servants, not masters.—**Ronald Pasion**

SANTIAGO


LACSON

ENRILE

Miriam. How can someone so arrogant and looks down on the Filipino people so much possibly be a good public servant? By saying she refuses to listen to anyone who hasn't gone to Yale or Harvard, she insulted 99 percent of the people.—**Audrey Tan**

I wouldn't vote for Recto. He has no track record. I don't think he's ready to assume the role of a senator yet.—**Annerose, 17**

I will never ever vote for Miriam. She's mockery personified.—**Orly, 25**

I would definitely not vote for the LDP-PNM candidates because they represent negative traditional politics based on image-building, popularity, empty promises, deception of the masses and self-gain.—**C. Licuanan, 23**

I'll never vote for Miriam. I will jump off from a plane without a parachute first before voting for that lunatic who has the gall to belittle our intelligence.—**Tals Diaz, 25**

Miriam. She's plain crazy, telling pro-Erap rallyists to make a revolutionary government.—**Jhari, 20**

I would never vote for Santiago, Honasan, Lacson, Enrile and Angara. As a citizen of this country, I expect aspiring leaders to exercise ethics in their activities. They are public figures. They should manifest good qualities that are exemplary to the Filipino people.- –**John Wil Victoriano, 20**

Enrile, Santiago, Lacson, Honasan, Puno, Jamby Madrigal. I don't expect anything from them. They are morally corrupt. I'll vote straight 13-0!—**Miyet, 20**

Miriam. It's like I'm entrusting my future to a psychopath and allowing her to disgrace our nation.—**Auster, 22**

Enrile. He's using the people for his gain. He doesn't have a stand, no principles of his own. He just goes with the current of the powerful people whom he thinks will help him achieve his selfish plans. Pathetic!—**Grace, 20**

Manoling Morato. He's a conservative close-minded prude. –**Jet, 18**

ANGARA

ESTRADA

MORATO

I'll never vote for Miriam because she's a megalomaniac; Enrile and Honasan because they're the devil's spawn; and Angara because I trusted him—I thought he was a good guy. Puno because they sent our countrymen to misguided death instead of calling for peace.—**Lille, 23**

Kiko and Recto of PPC. They're using the popularity of their wives to win in the upcoming elections.—**Ed, 20**

Miriam. She's a nut. That woman is truly... truly... she's the least person you would vote for. I would rank her up with Hitler and Anti-Christ sort of s--t.—**Gary**

Miriam Santiago—she's boastful, she has no principles when it comes to money, and she's deranged sometimes. Juan Ponce Enrile—he's power-hungry. Gringo Honasan—he's the puppet of Enrile and he can't do much in the Senate. Ping Lacson is involved in too many controversies. Loi Estrada—she's associated with the former President.—**Agustin**

I won't vote for Recto *kasi balimbing*. I won't vote for Enrile and Honasan because they have changed politics.—**Albert Gaduang**

Enrile. He's too old. He should give the new breed of leaders the chance.—**Eliza Ranon**

I will not vote for PPC's Recto and Pangilinan. They are not confident about winning. They have to be endorsed by their show-biz wives.—**Louella Arboleda, 23**

Miriam. I used to believe in her. I even voted for her for president. But now, after this survey, she'll cease to exist for me. As far as I'm concerned, she has betrayed the trust that I have placed in her. To me she's nothing but a lying sack of tissue and water masquerading as a human being. Jump off a plane like you promised and I might consider changing my mind. Considering all that she has said and done in recent months, I'm firmly convinced that she is truly out of her mind. And I don't mean that in a sarcastic, joking sense. I truly believe she's insane in the medical sense. I really do. It is in this, and only in this context, that her actions can make sense. Please get help. See a doctor. I'm really serious.

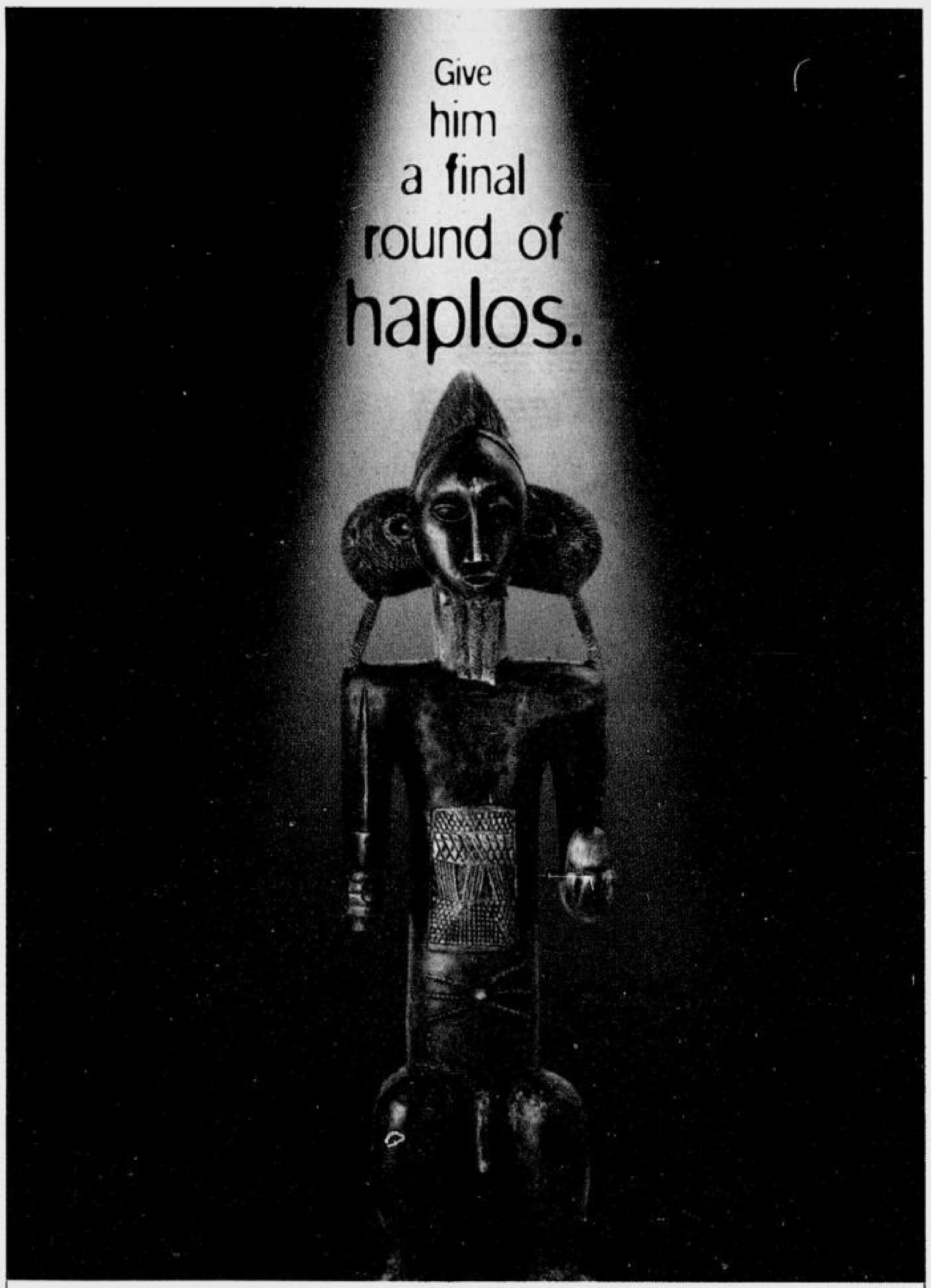
Ping. I've never seen this person smile even once and now he's smiling at me from his campaign poster because what? He wants me to vote for him? Kind of a shallow reason not to vote for a person, but believe me, I've got a ton of reasons not to vote for him, which I'd rather not say here.

Honasan. I can never respect anyone who supports a decision that would prevent the truth from coming out.—**Gerry Alanguilan**

HONASAN

PANGILINAN

RECTO



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She longs for a BF who ignores her

Carlos Garchitorena & September Mahino

DEAR Sep and Carlos,

I have a boyfriend. We've been going steady for three months now but I think our relationship isn't working. He used to be sweet, but now I really don't know what has happened to us. We're neighbors but he does not even call nor visit. I love him so much, but it seems he is not serious. Please advise me on what I should do because my studies and my relationship with my family have been affected. Thank you very much.

BONNIE

I am sure you're a very sweet girl and a loving girlfriend. But it takes two to tango, and a relationship's downfall isn't entirely one person's fault. I don't want any finger-pointing to happen in here. I just want it to be clear that you have to take some responsibility, too.

It's quite clear that things aren't so rosy now between you and your boyfriend. I don't like it when a girl has to do the work to keep a relationship alive, so before you lose your mind over what to do and what to say to bring back things to the way they were, ask yourself an interesting question: When is enough enough?

If the guy isn't willing even to keep simple promises such as calling you or showing up on a date, and doesn't seem to take you seriously, he's not worthy to be serious about as well. It would be easier to understand if you're having a long-distance relationship, but you're next-door neighbors. On the other hand, that may be the problem—you see each other too much and too often that he got claustrophobic.

Whatever the case is, there is no excuse for his behavior. You can try talking to him and asking him whatever happened that you weren't aware of. At least you won't be sitting in your room, stood up and clueless. It's up to your judgment if the reasons he would give you are valid, but I suggest you a take a break first because this relationship has taken its toll on your studies and that is not good. Be firm in communicating with him to let him know you deserve more than his careless treatment of your feelings.

Good luck.

SEP

Communication is truly the key in any interaction between social animals such as us humans. As exemplified by the development of a child after birth, it can take years before the toddler can form words, and then sentences. What, therefore is the prime motivator in adolescent humans to pursue a relationship with someone of the opposite sex in the hopeful perspective of taking him home as a prize?

Mother Nature, in cooperation with Evolution, presents the Complete History of the Planet Earth: A Struggle to Matter. This documentary would present the fact that all throughout the controverted, convoluted and contrived twists and turns in the story of life on earth, only one thing was essential, and that was the primal goal which was to survive.

Love is a cerebral concept, and although pheromones and, more popularly, hormones have played a large part in triggering events that would set up the greatest and romantic triumphs and failures in our history, the signals (fast heartbeat, swooning, tension in muscles and organs) are memoranda thumb-tacked on the announcement-board in our minds. We interpret this as love... chemistry if you wish.

This would be ideal and fun, really, except that there is a greater and more important list of directives that your medulla oblongata reads: Mental and psychological imprints that have been issued as permanent memos in your developmental stages. These include insecurities, dependencies and later on, the mental and emotional projections of the ideal partner as described in movies and books. Pure fantasy.

"What's love got to do with it? What's love but a secondhand emotion?" That is the question. Do you agree? Comments, thoughts, reactions. This is what makes us a credit to the world and evolution, not the mismanagement of emotions and sheer boredom!

Didi once said, "It is true that when we weigh the pros and cons with folded arms, we do credit to our species." That's what we need in this space—reflection on issues that matter and can be contributed to the great thoughts of society and world history in general.

Being a romantic is one thing, being hopelessly romantic is too much.

CALOY

ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

2BU to be young • to be you • to be young • to be you! • To be you!

The dark side of worshipping the sun

MAKEOVER 911

Kinny Salas

WHY is the sun getting such bad rap? What is with all this SPF, UVA and UVB all about? Isn't it a bit paranoid to apply sunblock if you are just crossing the street?

For a time I thought this was some scare tactic by companies that sold sunblock and antioxidants. Now instead of just following blindly, read on and understand how exactly the sun affects our health and beauty.

Sunlight—This is made up of invisible ultraviolet rays which are responsible for the tanning and burning effects on the skin. According to the American Skin Cancer Foundation, sunlight is responsible for over 90 percent of all skin cancers.

UV or ultraviolet radiation—one form of energy coming from the sun. Some of these UV rays stimulate a chemical on the skin called melanin to rise to the surface. Melanin is the pigment responsible for the darkening of the skin. The closer melanin is to the skin's surface, the darker one looks. Direct and incidental exposure to the sun can lead to necessary darkening and damage to the skin. The slightest tan or freckle is actually photodamage. You have killed cells on that area. There are three types of UV rays—A, B and C.

UVA—This maintains a relatively constant intensity throughout the year and penetrate more deeply into the skin layers than UVB. It is more harmful than UVB because it affects your skin during all hours of the day, even when it is raining or cloudy. UVA is not responsible for making us dark or burn but the damage it causes will appear later in life in the form of wrinkles and premature aging.

UVB—This is the one responsible for sunburns and tans. It is also called burning ray and is strongest during midday, summer months, at higher altitudes and places closer to the equator e.g. Davao. The UVB exposure we get during the course of our lives can cause skin cancer, cataracts and break down our immune system.

UVC a.k.a. infrared—This, although the strongest and most dangerous, is normally filtered by the ozone layer and does not reach the earth. It is harmful because it increases the effects of UV rays, causing more burning and more damage. This is responsible for the stinging, heating effect we feel when hit by sunlight gas that filters out certain wavelengths and affects ozone layer.

STEPH BRAVO

It's been some time since we've heard anyone talk about the ozone that we have relaxed on our part for its preservation. It prevents dangerous UV rays from reaching the earth. Manmade chemicals believed to destroy the ozone are called chlorofluorocarbons, which are used in aerosols and refrigeration. Reduction of the ozone layer may lead to greater exposure to UV radiation. According to the US Environmental Protection Agency, a 5-percent decrease in the ozone layer could increase UV radiation by 10 percent, which in turn could increase by 20 percent the incidence of skin cancer within the next 20 years.

Long-term effects of too much sun are: changes in skin color, brown (age) spots, loss of skin elasticity, sagging, premature wrinkling, leathery skin and melanoma.

Information provided by Coppertone and Neutrogena

For any questions, or products you want to road-test, write to Makeover 911, PDI Lifestyle or fax at 897-4805

True Faith premieres new sound

TRUE Faith premiered their latest single, "Sumasarap ang Gising," from the album "Live; (Legalized Intense Vague Emotions)" exclusively on Soundbuzz. com. The rumbling and infectious tune is an inspired mix of old-fashioned soul and modern pop.

Other sample tracks from "Live" on Soundbuz.com are "Basta't Basta," "Aanhin Pa," "Don't You Let Me Down" and "What Do I Mean to You Now."

Produced by Larry Chua and released by OctoArts. "Live" delivers an irresistible, fresh new sound incorporating horns and strings. It also showcases the kind of music that True Faith always wanted to do all these years—a mix of R&B, pop, jazz and the Motown sound.

The new album marks a new milestone in True Faith's musical styles after releasing their retrospective greatest hits album, "Memories Are Cheap".

True Faith, known for their signature hits "Perfect," "Alaala" and "Kundi Rin Lang Ikaw," has come a long way since the demo tape they sent to 99.5 RT stayed on the station's Top 40 charts for several weeks. A selection from the demo tape ("Awit para sa Kanya") was the Philippines' entry to the MTV Video Music Awards 2000.

Although they did not get the Asian Viewers Choice award, the nomination established them as one of the Philippines' most popular bands.

Check out their brand-new release on Soundbuzz.com. Thirty lucky Soundbuzz visitors can win special edition VCDs featuring video cuts from the album.

Soundbuzz.com focuses on the promotion, sampling and sale of legal and secure "downloadable" encrypted music. It works with International and Australian record labels to deliver electronically their repertoire of digital music securely using Digital Rights Management systems (eg: Microsoft and Intertrust).

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Malinis na hangarin
ituluy-tuloy natin!
BASURA
Jollibee PARK
earth day 2001
Jollibee
Noong Abril 23, libu-libong Jollibee crew at miyembro ng Superkids Club ang nagtipon-tipon sa Jollibee Paglilingkod sa Araw ng Kalikasan.

Sa pagdiriwang ng Earth Day, sila ay nagpulot ng basura, nagtanim ng puno, at nagpinta ng mga gutter upang luminis at lalong gumanda ang iba't ibang lugar sa Pilipinas. Ang mga batang kasali ay nakapulot naman ng aral tungkol sa tamang pagbubukod ng basura at kahalagahan ng malinis na kapaligiran.

Kaya sa lahat ng mga malinis ang hangarin na nagwalis at nagpawis para sa kalikasan, maraming salamat sa inyo! Pero tandaan natin, hindi pa tapos ang laban! Ituluy-tuloy na natin ang pagpapanatili ng likas na ganda ng ating daigdig!

Kalinisan ng mundo,
nagsisimula sa paligid mo.

A daughter talks about her 'ST' father

By JULES ALCANTARA

IT was quite refreshing to meet someone like Camille Villar. The daughter of one of the richest men in the country (and even in Asia), she must be, at the very least, a spoiled little princess, right? But she is quite the opposite. Self-effacing and simple, she exuded such self-awareness that to say she is a credit to her parents would not be an exaggeration.

SENATORIAL candidate Manny Villar with daughter Camille

Camille, the only daughter of senatorial candidate and former Speaker of the House Manny Villar, says that her dad loves all his children equally but it is safe to assume that she is daddy's darling. It was obvious during our conversation with the 16-year-old sophomore at International School that she simply adores her dad. The future senator is her most ardent text buddy. Camille even stresses that she has become closer to her dad as she got older.

Witty and pragmatic especially for a young teenager, she seems to have inherited her dad's charm and genuine interest in relating with people. She plans to take up business to "help out with my dad's business."

When asked what her earliest memory of her dad is, she says it's seeing him in his pajamas with his hair a bit disheveled, sipping coffee on an early Sunday morning while reading Asiaweek—"my dad always wears pajamas; you know, the long-sleeves type." Her *yaya* told her that when she was a kid and was in a crying fit, it was only her dad who could quiet her down.

Now that she is older, she has established a real connection with her dad—she can talk to him about anything, especially about her friends. She cites an experience wherein she got in a big fight with her friends and the only friend she felt she had at that time was her dad.

Camille's dad got her a mobile phone so they could always be in touch. "Only recently did he learn how to text. In the beginning I was his only text buddy. I would be in school and he would text, 'Hi darling! What's up?,'" she enthuses. She shares that at some point it was "the end of the world" for her dad every time they went to an area where there was no signal. "Sometimes he would be onstage and he would be texting me!" she adds. It was a phase, she clarifies with a laugh.

Her greatest fear is getting her dad upset since she has never seen him get mad or even yell at her. When I asked her about her dad's rule regarding boys she says there are none since "that hasn't been brought up for discussion."

Since she was young she has been aware that "my dad is funny, he's charismatic and he has a way with people." Although she was amazed the first time she went with a campaign, Camille says she is used to seeing her dad talking to a lot of people. She also adds that it was not disorienting for her to see her dad as a public figure because, as she puts it, "My dad is always my dad. He's the guy that I see first thing on a Sunday morning."

Even now that her dad's campaign schedule is quite hectic, her dad still manages to attend all her school affairs and even PTA meetings. Camille and her dad have been spotted several times watching PBA games and in fact, her dad was due to pick her up after our interview to watch a boxing match.

Although being the daughter of a national political figure has certain privileges, Camille says there are certain responsibilities that she has to fulfill. "You have to go the extra mile," she says, in order to live up to the expectations of others and live up to the achievements of not only her dad but also her mom. Her mother always stresses the need for simplicity and sincerity, especially in dealing with other people. Humble in many ways, she is always quick to point out that although she is quite lucky, her dad came from humble beginnings and did not have the same opportunities that she has now.

Her fondest memories are of the family taking vacations in the United States. The whole family is left to fend for themselves—no helpers or aides or bodyguards with them. She fondly recalls that one time, they had to go to the embassy and her dad asked her to iron a pair of pants. "He taught me how to iron. He even taught me how to wet a towel and you kinda rub it to remove the creases. While he was doing that he was so nonchalant about the whole thing but I was thinking 'My dad is teaching me how to iron!'" she enthuses.

Shopping for her dad is a "family event." "My mom, my brothers and I go individual shopping but with my dad, we all have to be with him. We tell him what to buy or what to wear. He likes looking young," she stresses. This explains why Manny Villar is one of the best dressed among the "senatoriables." Camille says that if there is one thing that people always notice, it is her dad's footwear, specifically his apparent preference for Kenneth Cole shoes which he got from his sons. She proudly shares that the watch he is wearing is something she got for him. "It has these digital seconds behind the actual watch," she says of the timepiece from Fossil. "My friends say he's a cool dresser. It's a whole family production," she adds with a laugh.

The family's involvement does not stop at shopping—they are just as involved when it comes to making major decisions. During the onset of the jueteng fiasco last year (which led to ex-President Joseph Estrada's impeachment in the Lower House and Manny Villar losing the Speakership) the senatorial candidate was in constant consultation with all the family members, Camille included. "He was always asking us what we thought [about the issue]." Every major decision he has to make is a "family decision. It's important to him that, at least, of all people, his family supports him," she explains.

Cite funny or memorable experiences during this year's campaign.

Well, I don't really get to go with them especially now 'coz I have class. But I try to come along whenever I can.

How do you react or deal with rumors involving your dad?

I'm used to it because it's part of politics. But I really hate it when they question his character. He's everything that I could really ask for. He's really such a great dad. He's a good family man and even as a person. I know that my dad does what he knows is right even if it's against what other people want. There are other people who are really villains—they have people killed and stuff, as opposed to my dad. You know some people say he's weak. He built himself from scratch. You would have to be a strong person to get to where he is. Now I even think that the criticisms that they throw at him are stupid. During the impeachment, I was in a class that discussed Philippine politics. Before he defected, people would criticize him for corruption. They don't tell me straight but some people say or imply that he got rich because he was the Speaker. But my dad was already rich before becoming a Speaker because of his businesses. He's self-made. I hate it that people get jealous! I get so bitter and angry about that but I guess I can't say anything or make *patol.*

Do you plan to follow the footsteps of your dad and get into politics?

I love current events. Politics interest me. But in terms of getting in there and being a candidate, I'm *dyahe.* I suck at impromptu speeches—my dad is brilliant at that. But I'm really really bad at that and you can't be like that if you're a politician. Plus I hate losing! (laughs!)

If you were to come up with your own campaign slogan for your dad, what would it be and why?

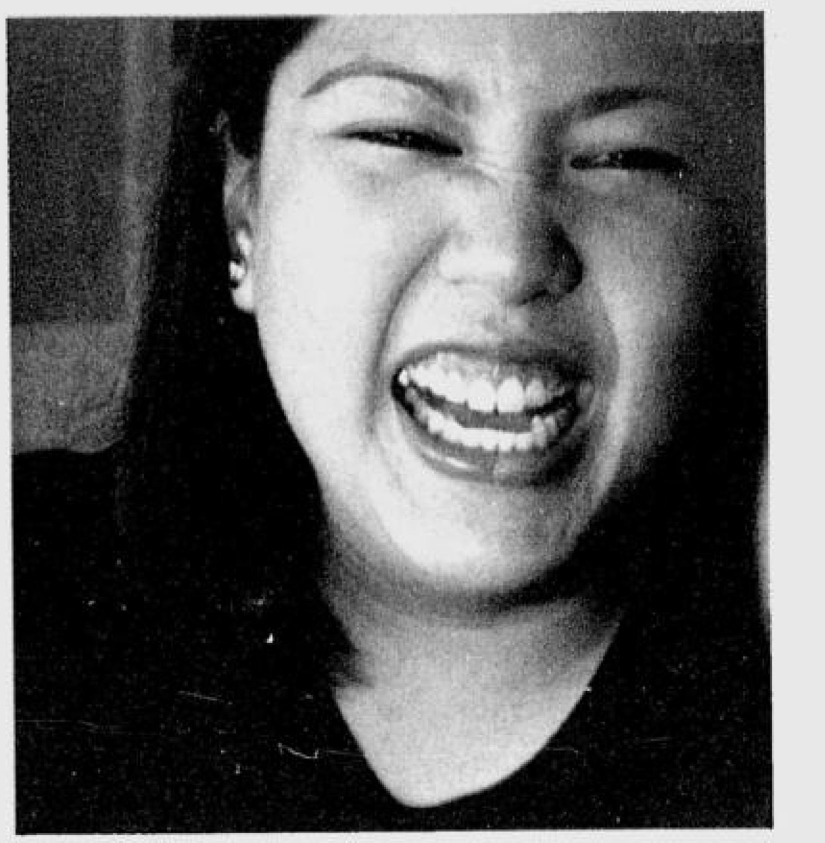
I'd still stick with *"Sipag and Tiyaga."* That's his life story. And those words apply to everything. We were watching a basketball game and Ginebra was creaming Shell. And this Shell fan shouted, *"Kaya 'yan basta sipag at tiyaga!"* and my dad was tickled. But it's true! You don't have to be smart! You just have to want it bad!

What is it about your dad that you are most proud of?

That he has achieved so much. And I'm proud simply because he is my dad. I have friends and they have dads. And like uhmm...I still feel lucky because I can still talk to my dad and everything. He really loves his family. I don't think anyone will ever love me as much as my dad loves me. And because of that I feel totally secure. And I'm proud of him because he has accomplished so much plus he has a kid like me who knows how much he loves me.

Conversation with the Big Man's stepdaughter

MA. Christina Genuino, or Trina as friends and acquaintances fondly call her, almost did not show up for the interview. She thought it was a joke that even when we were introduced, she was still reluctant and suggested instead Frank Drilon's children.



TRINA Genuino

A management graduate of the Ateneo de Manila University, she had just turned 23 the day before our interview. Bright, wholesome and bubbly, Trina is every inch a well-mannered woman. We could barely hear each other amidst the din of the full-packed Cena Restaurant in Libis, but still she managed to delight us with anecdotes of the campaign, and how "normal" their family is.

Everyone knows the love story of her mom and her "Tito Frank." The Genuino and the Drilon families have always been close. "He's actually my *ninong*," she says and adds that her late dad and Frank Drilon were the best of friends. "And it's so funny *nga kasi* Tito Frank and my Uncle Hector, who is the brother of my dad, are now best friends," she says with a laugh.

In fact, her mom and Violy (Frank Drilon's late wife) and the senatorial candidate used to walk around the village together. Trina shares that spending Christmas lunch together has been a family tradition for the longest time for the Genuinos and the Drilons.

Although there have been no problems in adjusting to a new family set-up, Trina says it was actually the idea of her mom getting married again that caught her and her sister by surprise. Her mom had been a widow for 10 years and she and her siblings are understandably very attached to their mother. Trina and her sister "freaked out" and were "quite upset" when their mom told them over dinner that Tito Frank "likes" her. Initially, it was just her brother who was supportive of the impending union between their mom and Frank Drilon. But things eventually changed once they got married. Her Tito Frank did not try to woo them but just waited for her and her sister to come around and from then on things have been running smoothly. Trina admits that if there had been a problem in the beginning, it was she for she was not initially open to the idea of her mom's remarrying. "He has always been the same. He has always been nice and until now, he's still very nice. It was just me. I was being *masungit*," she shares.

When asked if they have become close since then, "Super! But then again we have always been close 'coz he's my ninong," she replies. Trina shares that her Tito Frank has always been a great godfather. "I always get the best gifts," she says with a laugh. Trina also says that she and her siblings have always been close to the Drilon kids and this has been reinforced now that they are a family. "Tito Frank calls all of us kids *Baba*, which is a Bicolano term for love," she articulates.

They have been used to the fact that her Tito Frank is a celebrity. Even before he and her mom got married, they have already been privy to his activities and endeavors, such as the constant stream of people wanting to speak to him even in the middle of dinner or lunch. Their Tito Frank's being an influential public servant truly dawned on them during the impeachment trial. "At home he is very simple. But when we were watching the impeachment, and seeing him making important decisions for the country, *parang wow!* He's so influential *pala.* He can *really* do something for our country, "she enthuses.

Trina says even though her Tito Frank is preoccupied with a lot of things, especially the campaign and other domestic issues, he still manages to spend time with her and the other children and even hang out with their friends and regale them with stories about Dexter, the little boy in the campaign posters who sits atop the senatorial candidate's shoulders. No, he is not Frank Drilon's son but there is a running joke perpetuated by Trina's mom. Since the future senator can no longer carry any of his children, they had to hire the services of a talent. "She (the mom) thinks it's the funniest joke and everywhere we go, she says that all the time so *parang* 'Mom, please?'" Trina laughs out loud. "It's not funny anymore," she adds, still laughing.

The children try to accompany the senator on the campaign sorties as often as they can. All of them are shy so Trina always ends up pushing Patrick, her stepbrother and Frank Drilon's eldest son, to speak for them.

If there is one issue wherein her Tito Frank sides with the children it is where to have Sunday dinner or lunch. They share a love for food that he even teases them that they only accompany him in sorties because of the food and the eating-out after.

Cite funny or memorable experiences during the campaign.

I go with them on weekends because I have work. We meet a lot of people but we are so shy. Some people in his staff would tell us that they would make us *pakilala* to this and that group of people and we're there *lang, nahihiya* (laughs out loud). Sometimes they want us to talk and make *pakilala* that *kami po 'yung mga anak ni* Sen. Drilon, which is so not like us! We're really shy! I always tell Patrick that he has to shape up *kasi ang gwapo-gwapo pa naman n'ya.* But he's just as shy as I am and Eliza so no one's gonna do it. We get excited when someone like Jun Magsaysay shakes our hands! (smiles).

It's really fun going on a campaign with him *kasi* people kiss him a lot. There's a description he uses every time this happens—he says *para s'yang* Black Nazareno (laughs). Especially after the impeachment *kasi* when he passes *talagang dinudumog s'ya*, they touch him. He actually says that the people are so nice because they don't scratch him, they're not rough—they just wanna touch him.

Sometimes Eliza and I would walk behind him and reach out and shake the people's hands. But then they don't know us, so *wala lang* they don't make us *pansin!* (laughs again!) If there are people who are shy to shake hands with him, my mom would get the hand of Tito Frank and the hands of these people who are shy. And we are like, 'Mom! What are you doing?' and she would tell them, 'You shake! You shake!.' She's *naawa daw* 'coz these people daw are so shy!

If you were to come up with your own campaign slogan for your Tito, what would it be and why?

There was one slogan that I particularly liked and it's *"Matibay ang prinsipyo"* and they actually used it during the first phase of the campaign. But I guess to reach out to more people, we have to use a more emotional slogan which "Big Man" actually conveys. But in terms of substance or to depict what kind of person he really is, then it would be *"Matibay ang prinsipyo."*

How do you react or deal with rumors against your Tito?

No one *naman* has actually come up to me or has made me *bastos.* But then even good friends would actually ask, "How clean is your Tito anyway?" or they'd ask if it's possible for politicians not getting anything. I guess, as my real dad would say it, 'If you don't do anything wrong, then there's no reason to be ashamed even if the rest of the world thinks otherwise.' And I think all of us live by that.

Do you have plans of pursuing a career in politics, just like your Tito Frank?

(Laughs and takes some time before she answers the question) It would always interest me (especially public service) but then I guess I would have to start the right way, like take up law. I think I'd be a better public servant if I knew what I was talking about.

Well, we don't really know what's gonna happen *pero* I'm open.

What is it about your Tito Frank that you are most proud of?

(Becomes quiet for a while) Wait *lang,* I'm thinking *kasi* there are many. (Grins). I guess it's his being a man of principle, that he's not the type who would put one over you, no matter who you are, may it be his peers, his fellow senators, or us, or the drivers, his staff. Even his staff thinks so highly of him and it's so nice when you overhear them talking *na sila-sila* lang, they really speak highly of him, even when sometimes he gets mad at them. But then at the end of the day, the staff makes him lambing and everything will be okay. So I'm thinking, "This guy must really be a nice guy!"

Jules Alcantara

On the campaign trail

By LESLIE ANN CO TAN

I AM not running for any seat in the upcoming elections. Nor do I harbor any aspirations or illusions of becoming a politician. However, I did find myself on the campaign trail for one of PPC's senatorial candidates. *Mareng* Winnie Monsod is one of the popular professors in the School of Economics at the UP Diliman, where I study. The school is one of her campaign headquarters, and as an active student leader, I found myself getting involved.

On the morning of March 31, I roused myself from slumber and met up with other supporters of *Mareng* Winnie in the lobby of the School of Economics at about 8 a.m. A motorcade around QC was scheduled that day and I was glad to be a part of it, albeit the sleepiness I felt. When the group thickened, we set out in about five cars plus a rented jeep, with a megaphone attached that would play the Monsod jingle. We met up with more volunteers from QC and more cars along the way to complete the cast.

At last we were ready to hit the road. Little did I know that I, very apolitical until now, would be ill prepared for what was to come.

Though we had an itinerary all neatly planned out, traffic kept us from fulfilling it faithfully. Still, we turned it into an opportunity. At the slightest hint of traffic, volunteers spilled out from their cars and gave flyers to the *sari-sari* stores lining the streets, tricycle drivers, those in jeepneys, etc...

On my part, I stayed inside the car, opened the window and started a conversation with people in cars beside ours in traffic. There were those who simply received our campaign materials. But some openly encouraged our efforts, saying they were sure to vote 13-0. They boosted our spirits greatly. Still, there were others who flirted with us, asking for phone numbers. These questions, we deftly sidestepped with a smile while trying to gain their vote.

In busy areas, the group would park the cars and disperse to "cover the area." While some stood on the sidewalks to campaign to passersby, my friend and I covered some stores at the far end of the street. The first one was a *sari-sari* store. The owner was quite accommodating, allowing us to post *Mareng* Winnie posters on his storefront and even offering us water. Some stores refused our posters, though, claiming they did not want to get involved.

At a gasoline station, I approached a man, using my usual line, *"Iboto po natin si Mareng* Winnie *sa* May 14," while handing out a flyer.

The man took it and asked, *"Wala bang sobre?"*

At first I didn't get it. What was he talking about? What envelop? He repeated his question and it dawned on me: Ah... *sulsol.* I said *"Wala hong ganoon.* PPC *po kasi 'to,"* I smiled as sweetly as I could, and quickly left.

In the *palengke,* it was a different story. Higher noise level, more people concentration and also an increased sense of danger, since we later learned that a lot of them were Erap loyalists. My comrades went inside the vicinity. I stationed myself outside with a fellow volunteer and together we held up a 3-meter long banner that proudly proclaimed our candidate. Our goal: To catch the attention of motorists and drivers who were passing that congested road. It was a small thing to do, but you soon realize that small things make the difference.

At the end of the day, I asked myself, why did I spend my Saturday morning campaigning for *Mareng* Winnie when my econometrics final exam was up in two days' time? It wasn't because she was my professor some years back and I got a good grade. It wasn't because I was giddy about talking with virtual strangers, shaking their hands and initiating conversations. In fact, I shy away from that. It wasn't because I wanted to take sides with a winner. Admittedly, surveys show that Monsod is almost there, but not quite. She's within striking distance of the Magic 13.

The only sensible answer I had was that I felt I had to do my part. In light of recent events, I feel that more than ever this upcoming elections is more crucial than previous ones. To tell you the truth, I am one of the 4.5 million youth who weren't able to register. Ironic, isn't it? But I feel that if I pass on the message to at least 10 others about who I believe are the "worthy candidates," then I would have produced the same result. It was as if I had voted. And I would have been vindicated tenfold.

A step-by-step guide for that day of revenge

First-time voter? Fret not. 2bU! gives you a short overview—what to do, where to go, what to expect

BY JASON DOPLITO
2bU! Correspondent

FINALLY! The day when you can give the Mad Cow a major kick in the butt has arrived! We know that the wait since Edsa II has been long, and by now, young voters are raring to go and cast that vote that we only wish could send losers to the next "Survivor" series. But how exactly does the great Philippine voting system work? Fear not the seemingly antiquated ballot-casting method we have in the country. It's not state-of-the-art but it's all we've got so live with it. Here are the steps to take so your vote gets counted come election time:

Be there early

On May 14, polling places are expected to open at 7 a.m., at which time, voting may already start. To know if you're eligible to vote, check the list of names posted at your precinct (these names are also contained in a book of voters, together with their registration records).

If you find your name there, proceed to the board of election inspectors who are assigned to your precinct. They will give you your ballot. If, however, they doubt your identity, they will ask you for different ID cards. So remember to bring them, even your ACA membership card. When that is settled, your name will be announced loud enough for everyone in the room to hear. There are two reasons they do this: one is so that you will hear your own name being called and two, so everybody else can take a good look at you and identify you immediately for the evening news in case you turn out to be the Evil Emperor.

Voters will be entertained according to their place in line, so make sure you come in early. Before the chair of the board gives you your ballot, he/she will apply indelible ink at the base of your right forefinger nail. Don't be vain and refuse to have your manicure ruined. So what if it cost you P50 per fingernail? Chuck the glamour just this once—this is your vote we're talking about.

Affix your signature at the back of your ballot after receiving it. Then, you may proceed to the portable voting booths, in which you may start voting. Most of the time there is no voting booth. You are a given a classroom desk, with a folder to cover whatever you wish to write on your ballot.

Fill in the ballot by writing the names of the individual candidates, and the name of the registered party, organization or coalition you want to be represented under the party-list system. A list of the certified list of candidates and party list should be posted right in there. Take note that you are not allowed to show your ballot to anyone, or make a list/copy of the contents of your ballot. If somebody says he will give you P500 to vote for, say, Tessie Oreta's daughter but you have to make a carbon copy of your ballot to prove it, tell him to shove his money up his you-know-what.

A ballot will be considered spoiled (meaning, it won't be counted) when it is accidentally defaced, its coupon is detached in front of the board and when the serial number of the ballot you return doesn't correspond to the number earlier given. In some of these cases, you may be allowed to change your ballot, but for not more than once.

Drop it

After having filled your ballot, fold it in the same manner as when you received it, then submit it to the board. Affix your thumb mark at the space provided in the coupon then return the ballot to the chair. In your presence, he/she will verify its serial number to determine if it is the same ballot originally given to you. When that is settled, affix your thumb mark again, this time at the back of your Voter Registration Record. Wait for him/her to return your ballot to you, which you will have to deposit yourself in the compartment for valid ballots. If somebody tries to take your ballot away from you and says he'll drop it for you, tell him to drop dead instead.

Now you can finally leave the polling place. For chronic latecomers, remember that voting will end at 3 p.m. So, please, if you don't want to miss out on that chance to change things in our country—and the chances come few and far between—get your priorities straight and get to the polling place bright and early.

Unregistered youth take the lead toward new Philippine politics

BY MICHAEL DIZON GARCIA
2bU! Correspondent

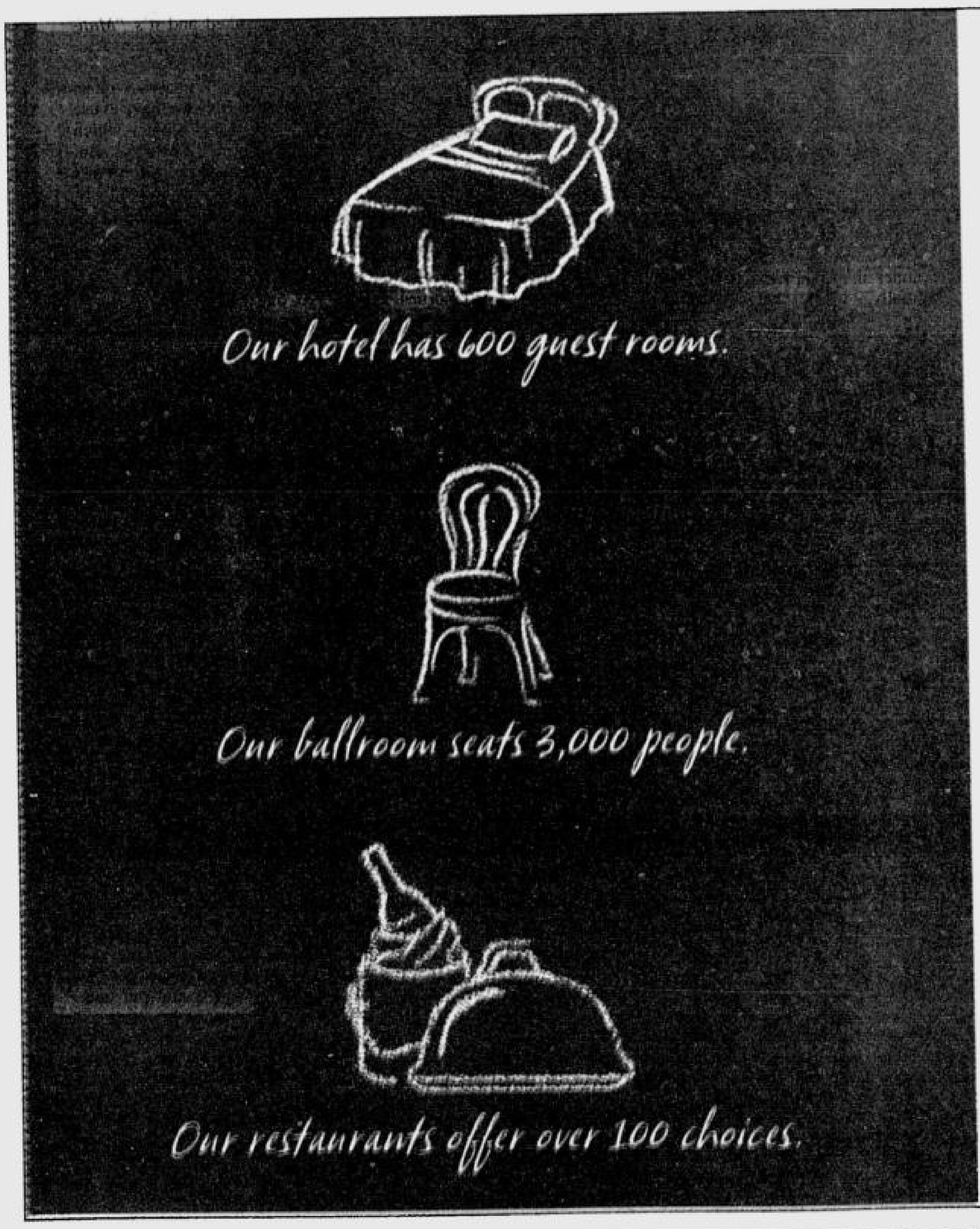
THE COMING May 14 elections is one of the most anticipated in our country's recent history. Why should it not be, when many Filipinos are just very eager to prove to themselves and to the international community that they are very much capable of steering the country's politics to new dimensions? After having made a mistake of enthroning Joseph Estrada to the presidential seat, as many believed, these very people could have likely told themselves that they will not commit the same mistake of voting for someone like him again. There is no better opportunity to concretize this mentality than the coming election. Of course, we would not be voting yet for a new president but the idea is to choose candidates for office who have better track records, so unlike our experience with self-interested leaders, our hopes would have better chances of being addressed and not just be left hanging as flowery promises. With all these fuss about the importance of the coming election, some supposedly eligible voters would, however, be rendered unable to vote, just because they were not able to register. What then for them?

Sometimes, I believe that one reason our politics always seem to backtrack just when things seem to be getting better already is that our system sometimes tends to be constrained with technicalities. Just because a due date for registration was not met, would it mean that millions of votes have to be discredited? I am not proposing a political system, which is arbitrary and subject to the whims of the masses. What I am driving at is that in the process of observing the procedures, we should not lose sight of what is proper, what course of action may constitute a better contribution to the common good. Would it be so detrimental to the pride of the country if the Comelec were to compromise with the millions who were not able to register, if another registration be held? I do not think so. These unregistered youths comprised part of those who dared to go to Edsa last February "to break the rules." Now, would we not be as willing to somehow give in to the demands of these "law-breakers" and also break the rules, just like what they did? We definitely would not want their voices to be heard only on the streets, as if they have no capacity to have their wants pronounced through more subtle means, as through the electoral means.

Besides, the Comelec, too, contributed to the inability of these millions of youth to register. Had concerned people been more effective in their information campaign, had there been any, then we would have not wasted as much votes. The candidates, too, had they not been very obsessed with planning for their own campaigns, would have at least reminded the many uninformed youths regarding the registration. But so much so for all the pinpointing, for the youth have to remain proactive, whatever situation they be made to face.

As has been already alluded to, there still are some things the youth can do, unable they may be to vote. There are volunteer groups, like the Namfrel, wherein their service may be needed. Among the things that can be done is to volunteer as precinct marshals. After the voting proper, they may also help in the tabulation of votes and in other related processes. Truly, the will of the youth may not just be confined to casting their votes, for with such will also comes the desire to have a peaceful and honest election. Perhaps, it is in this latter aspect that the youth can do much, for nobody may be as hopeful and vigilant as they are. Besides, as some cliché may suggest, nobody really reaps the benefits of political uprightness more than the young generation does.

The real issue this coming May 14 elections is change. Time and again, we have tried experimenting with different formulae for arriving at a kind of change that is revolutionary, in the real sense of the word. On many of these occasions, we have seen ourselves arriving at the wrong formula, only to watch our hopes get crushed at the hands of corrupt and inefficient leaders. For once in our recent history, let the voice of the youth be the one to steer Philippine politics to new dimensions, to dimensions of will power and action. But this would not come into full actualization, not unless they be given the proper channels to direct their needs; not unless their right to vote is properly acknowledged and promoted.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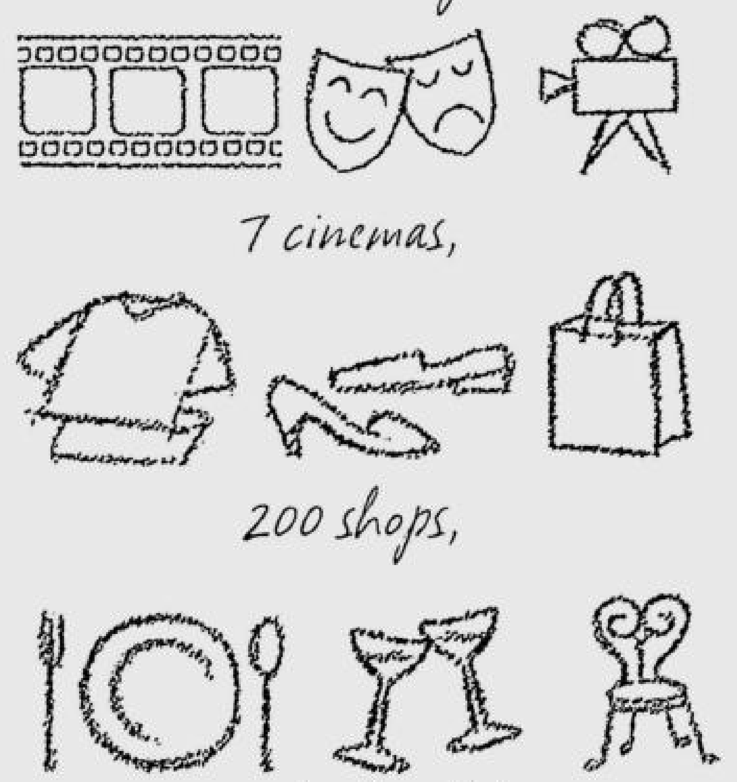
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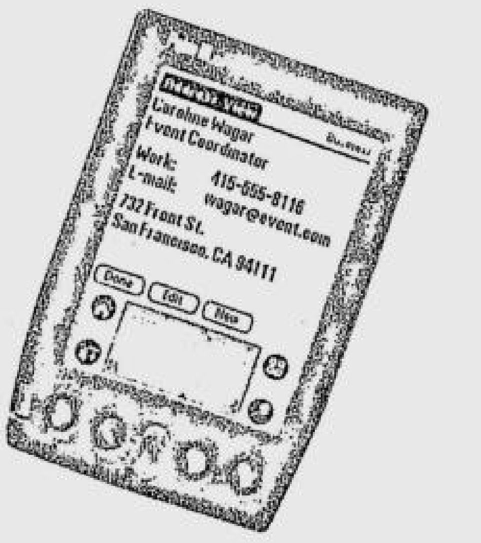

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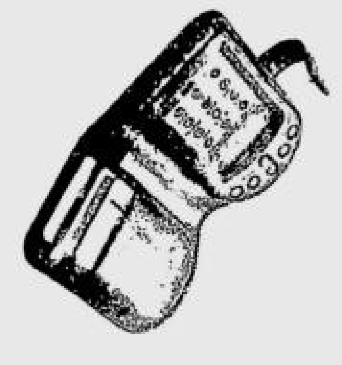

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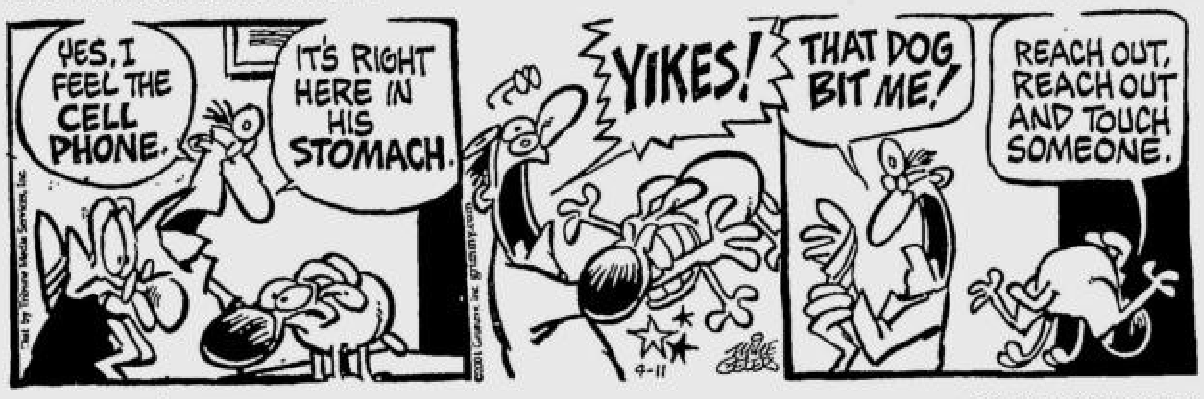
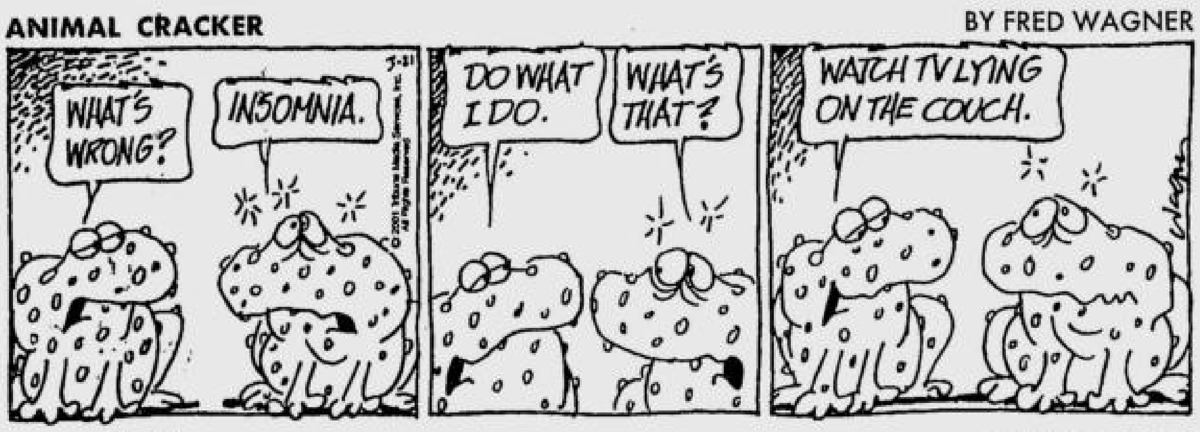
BY MIKE PETERS


YES, I FEEL THE CELL PHONE.
IT'S RIGHT HERE IN HIS STOMACH.
YIKES!
THAT DOG BIT ME!
REACH OUT, REACH OUT AND TOUCH SOMEONE.
4-11

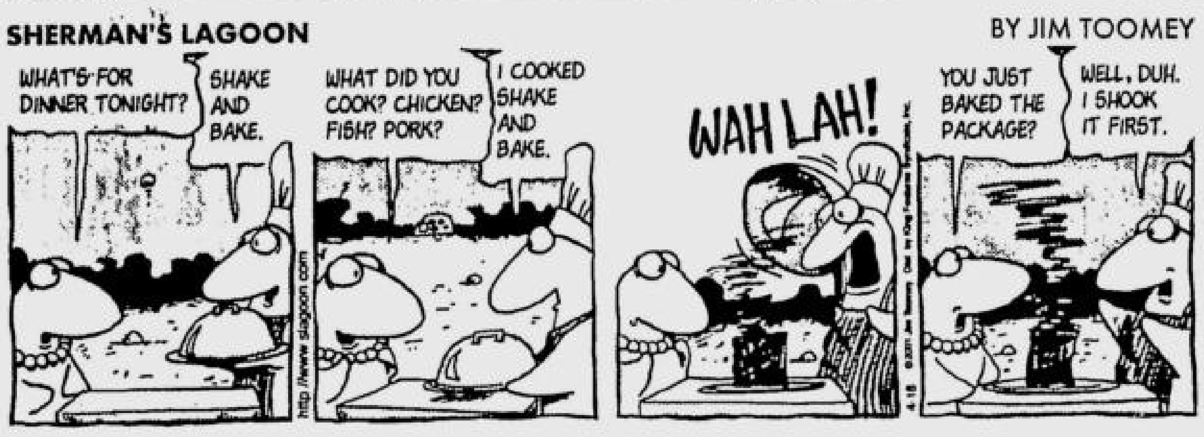
ANIMAL CRACKER

BY FRED WAGNER


WHAT'S WRONG?
INSOMNIA.
DO WHAT I DO.
WHAT'S THAT?
WATCH TV LYING ON THE COUCH.

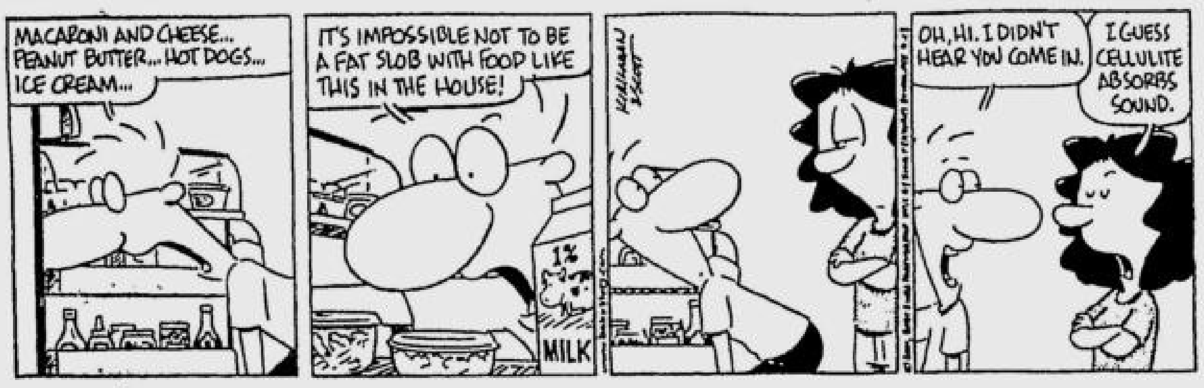
SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY


WHAT'S FOR DINNER TONIGHT?
SHAKE AND BAKE.
WHAT DID YOU COOK? CHICKEN? FISH? PORK?
I COOKED SHAKE AND BAKE.
WAH LAH!
YOU JUST BAKED THE PACKAGE?
WELL, DUH. I SHOOK IT FIRST.
http://www.slagoon.com

BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


MACARONI AND CHEESE... PEANUT BUTTER... HOT DOGS... ICE CREAM...
IT'S IMPOSSIBLE NOT TO BE A FAT SLOB WITH FOOD LIKE THIS IN THE HOUSE!
1%
MILK
OH, HI. I DIDN'T HEAR YOU COME IN.
I GUESS CELLULITE ABSORBS SOUND.

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Billy Joel, Mike Wallace, Candice Bergen, Albert Finney, Glenda Jackson, Mona Van Duyn, John Ashcroft

Happy Birthday: Nothing can stand in your way if you are determined to reach your destination. This is a year when you can show how good you are and what you are capable of. Shed any lack of confidence and look at the big picture. You have what it takes, so go after it. Your numbers: 4, 19, 25, 28, 33, 41

ARIES (March 21-April 19): You can learn from past mistakes if you take the time to recall your errors. Exaggeration may get you into trouble with relatives or close friends. Don't push your luck. It's best to keep a low profile.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): You need to invest your money conservatively in bonds or other places that will help you save. Don't let your health suffer because you haven't been taking good care of yourself.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): A good friend may be interested in more than just a friendship. You'd better look at the situation realistically or you may ruin the friendship that you already have with one another.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): You can make financial gains if you are willing to invest in a project you believe in. Take care of legal matters that have been hanging over your head.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): You'll be more interested in having fun than in your work right now. You should take another look at your future direction. It may be time for a career change. A challenge would do you some good.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Don't let your emotions take over. Your partner may blow situations out of proportion if you don't give the signals he or she is looking for. Don't let your financial worries get you down.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): You can make lasting friendships today. Attend social events that interest you, and romantic opportunities will follow. Travel, lectures and social gatherings will enhance your confidence.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Elaborate on an idea you have for a product or service for the home. Look into the cost, but don't try to get backing yet. You've got a money-maker if you plan stringently.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Don't try to skirt emotional issues with your lover. If you go into hiding, you may find yourself all alone when you come out. You have to face the music.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): You can impress superiors with your talent and your dedication. Don't hesitate to present your ideas to those who may be able to offer the financial backing you're looking for.

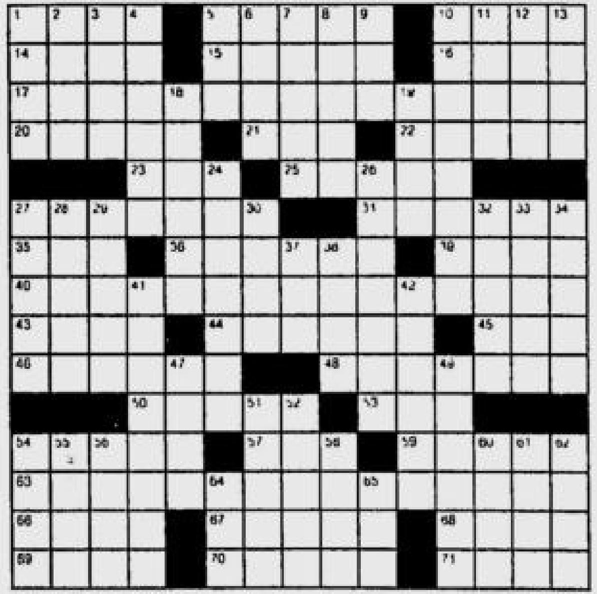
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Participate in organizations. Now is the time to go after that leadership position you've been eyeing. You will get the support you need when it comes to putting your ideas into motion.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Your friends won't have your best interests at heart. You need to step back and view your situation with a microscope. Stay away from overindulgent people.

Birthday Baby: You've got spunk, and nothing is going to stop you from getting where you want to go. You are dashing, debonair and definitely intent on making yourself heard.

DAILY CROSSWORD

TMSPuzzles@aol.com



By Stanley B. Whitten
Highwood, IL

3/23/01

ACROSS
1 By oneself
5 Guam port, once
10 __ Bator, Mongolia
14 Fuel cartel's letters
15 Pasted
16 __ contendere
17 Minute search method
20 Unit of magnetic flux density
21 Yow, it's cold!
22 Small amounts
23 __ pro nobis
25 Desert bloom
27 Sink by design
31 Append
35 NYC subway line
36 Parcels out
39 Last of a switch?
40 Revel
43 Pinnacle
44 Thin layer
45 Get the point
46 Mexican shawl
48 Motel guests
50 Also-ran
53 Titled Brit
54 Mirage image
57 Ignited
59 Blockade
63 Criminal close call
66 Nastase of tennis
67 Harriet Nelson's hubby
68 Father
69 Youngsters
70 "True Grit" star John
71 Corn units

DOWN
1 Yielding readily to pressure
2 Sheriff Taylor's kid
3 Optical device
4 Spotted wildcat
5 Gone by
6 Gooey mass
7 Singing cowboy Gene
8 Former Indian leader
9 Humorist writer George
10 Not covered with a layer
11 Joe Orton play
12 Soprano Gluck
13 One-point jacks in cribbage
18 Clan pattern
19 Ref. book
24 Pairs of genes
26 Gambling houses
27 George Eliot's Marner
28 Thin pancake
29 State
30 Klensch of CNN
32 Stood up
33 Cringe in fear
34 Sharpens
37 Resistance measure
38 Follow
41 Wood sorrels
42 Salad veggie
47 Luxurious
49 Dolphins QB, once
51 Famous fair lady
52 Fancy-schmancy
54 Last bio?
55 Woody Guthrie's boy
56 Business outfit
58 Dilute
60 Writer/director Kazan
61 Teri of "Tootsie"
62 Sheep moms
64 Holy cow!
65 Golf-hole starter

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

S	H	U	T	■	S	A	D	A	T	■	A	B	E	T
T	O	N	I	■	A	R	E	N	A	■	N	A	N	A
A	N	I	M	A	L	M	A	G	N	E	T	I	S	M
B	E	T	E	L	■	■	R	U	N	N	E	R	U	P
S	Y	S	T	E	M	S	■	S	E	T	■	D	E	S
■	■	■	A	X	I	L	S	■	R	A	G	■	■	■
A	R	A	B	■	L	E	O	S	■	I	R	A	T	E
C	A	T	L	I	K	E	R	E	F	L	E	X	E	S
T	O	T	E	M	■	K	E	N	O	■	Y	E	L	P
■	■	■	S	P	F	■	N	O	R	A	H	■	■	■
T	V	A	■	A	R	S	■	R	E	M	O	V	E	D
O	I	L	S	L	I	C	K	■	■	B	U	O	N	O
P	R	I	M	A	L	I	N	S	T	I	N	C	T	S
A	G	E	E	■	L	O	E	S	S	■	D	A	R	E
Z	O	N	E	■	S	N	E	A	K	■	S	L	Y	S

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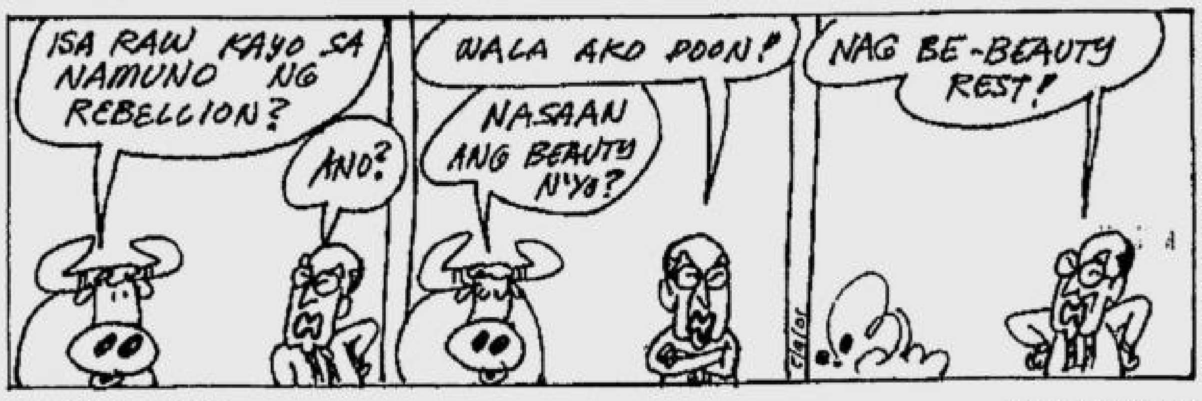
3/23/01

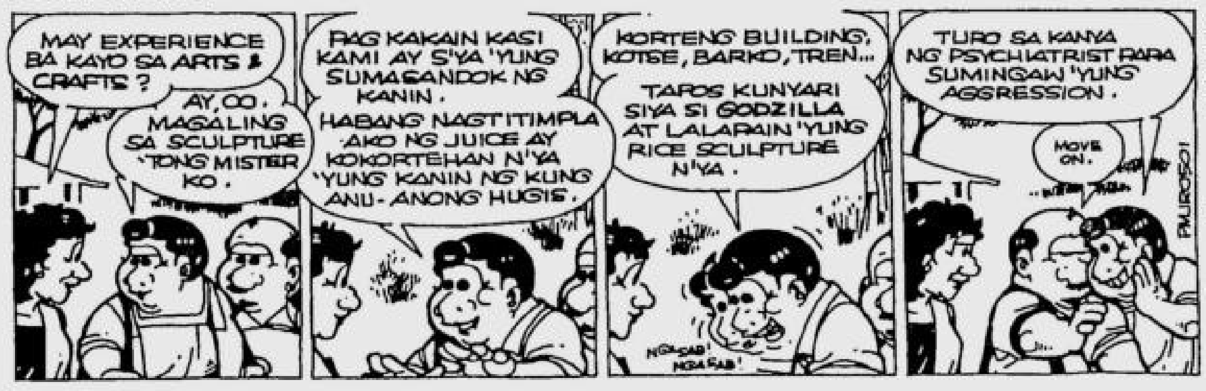
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


ISA RAW KAYO SA NAMUNO NG REBELLION?
ANO?
WALA AKO DOON!
NASAAN ANG BEAUTY N'YO?
NAG BE-BEAUTY REST!

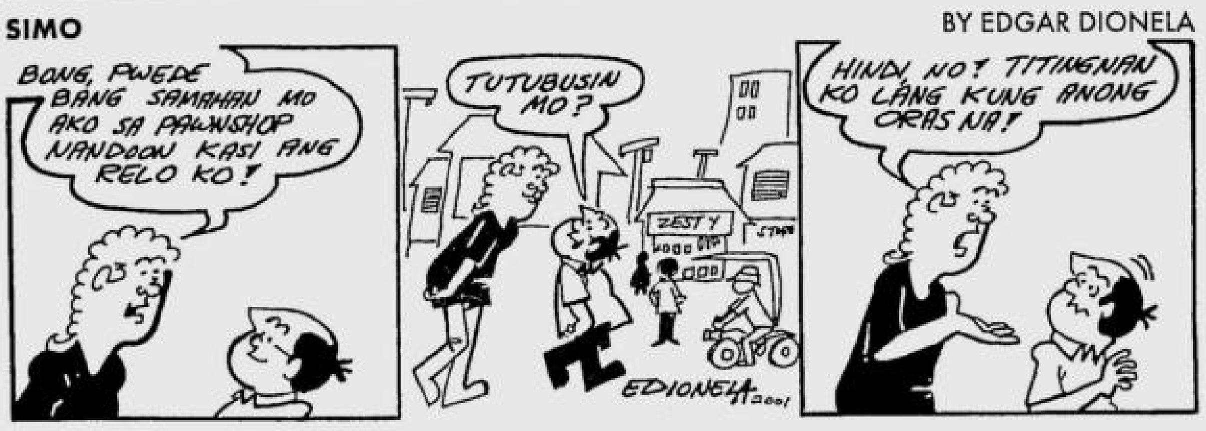
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


MAY EXPERIENCE BA KAYO SA ARTS & CRAFTS?
AY, OO. MAGALING SA SCULPTURE 'TONG MISTER KO.
PAG KAKAIN KASI KAMI AY S'YA 'YUNG SUMASANDOK NG KANIN.
HABANG NAGTITIMPLA AKO NG JUICE AY KOKORTEHAN N'YA 'YUNG KANIN NG KUNG ANU-ANONG HUGIS.
KORTENG BUILDING, KOTSE, BARKO, TREN...
TAPOS KUNYARI SIYA SI GODZILLA AT LALAPAIN 'YUNG RICE SCULPTURE N'YA.
NGASAB! NGASAB!
TURO SA KANYA NG PSYCHIATRIST PARA SUMINGAW 'YUNG AGGRESSION.
MOVE ON.
PMJUROSOI

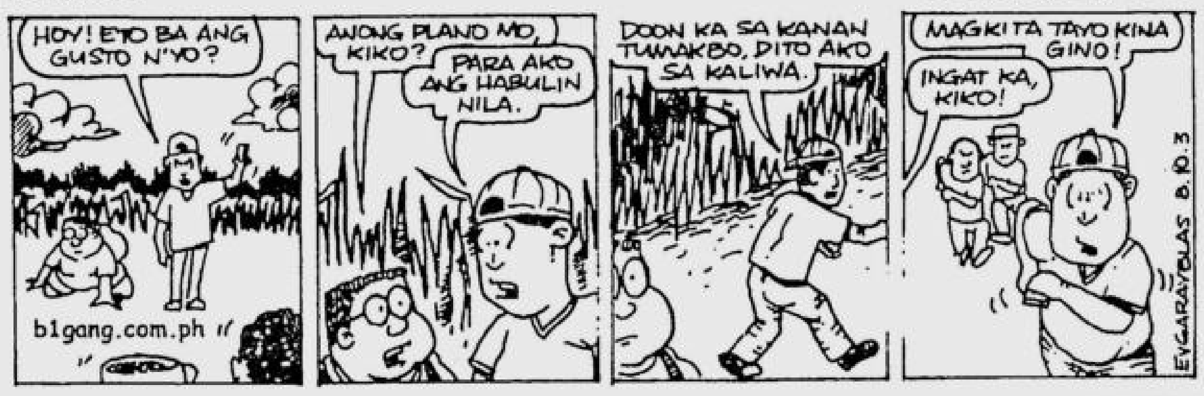
SIMO

BY EDGAR DIONELA


BONG, PWEDE BANG SAMAHAN MO AKO SA PAWNSHOP NANDOON KASI ANG RELO KO!
TUTUBUSIN MO?
ZESTY
HINDI, NO! TITINGNAN KO LANG KUNG ANONG ORAS NA!
EDIONELA 2001

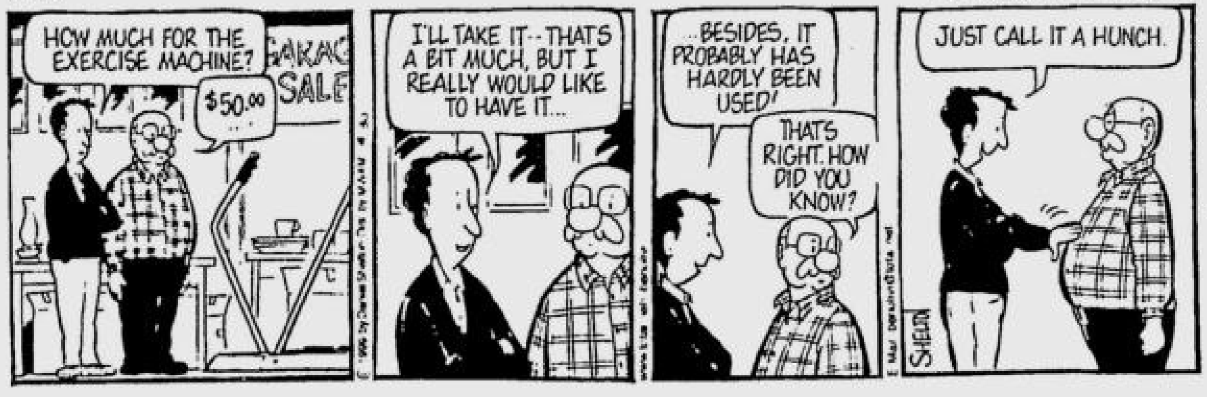
B1 GANG

BY ATS11/ JEA/ FEVG


HOY! ETO BA ANG GUSTO N'YO?
b1gang.com.ph
ANONG PLANO MO, KIKO?
PARA AKO ANG HABULIN NILA.
DOON KA SA KANAN TUMAKBO, DITO AKO SA KALIWA.
MAGKITA TAYO KINA GINO!
INGAT KA, KIKO!
EVGARAVILAS 8.10.3

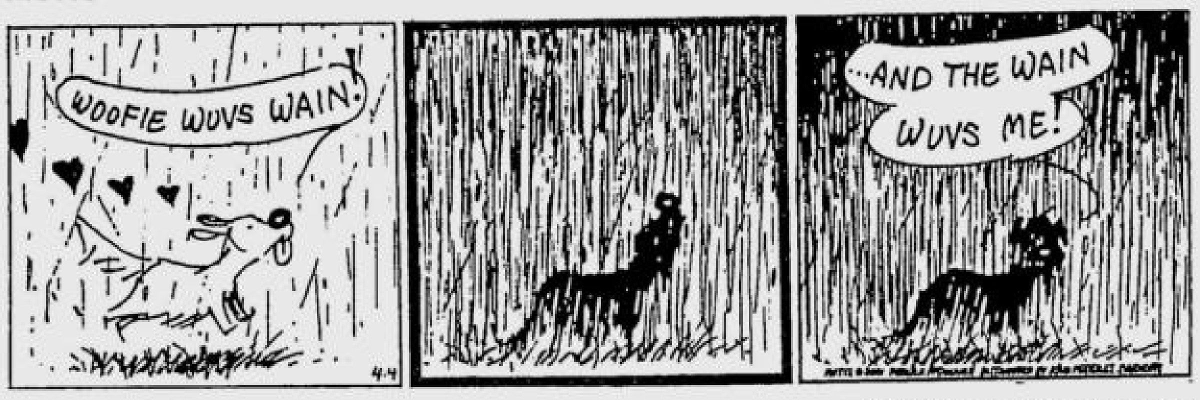
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


HOW MUCH FOR THE EXERCISE MACHINE?
GARAGE SALE
$50.00
I'LL TAKE IT--THATS A BIT MUCH, BUT I REALLY WOULD LIKE TO HAVE IT...
...BESIDES, IT PROBABLY HAS HARDLY BEEN USED!
THAT'S RIGHT. HOW DID YOU KNOW?
JUST CALL IT A HUNCH.
SHELTON

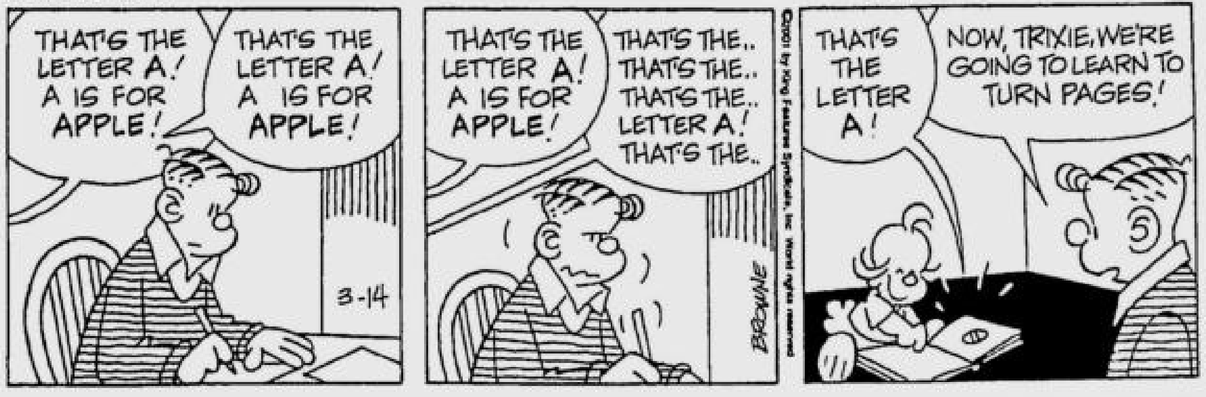
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


WOOFIE WUVS WAIN!
4-4
...AND THE WAIN WUVS ME!

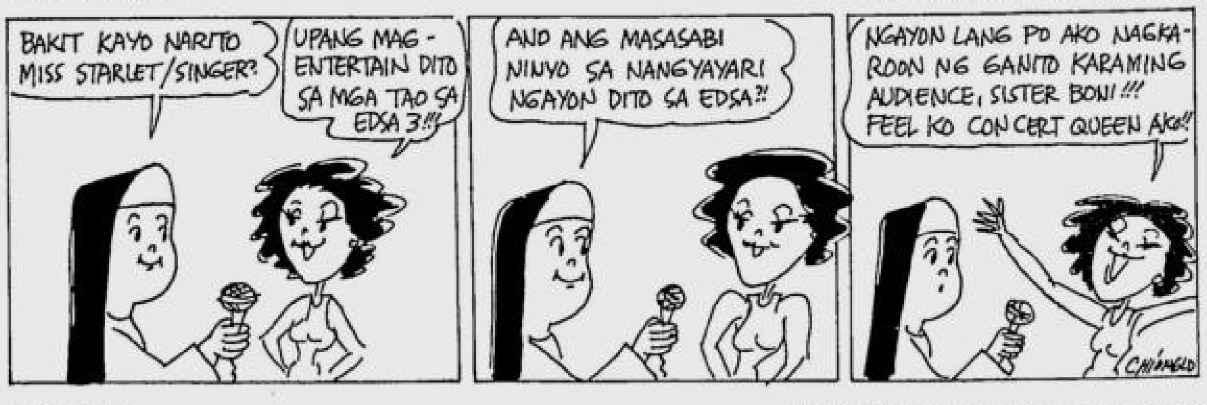
HI AND LOIS

BY BRIAN & GREG WALKER


THAT'S THE LETTER A! A IS FOR APPLE!
THAT'S THE LETTER A! A IS FOR APPLE!
3-14
THAT'S THE LETTER A! A IS FOR APPLE!
THAT'S THE.. THAT'S THE.. THAT'S THE.. LETTER A! THAT'S THE..
BROWNE
THAT'S THE LETTER A!
NOW, TRIXIE, WE'RE GOING TO LEARN TO TURN PAGES!

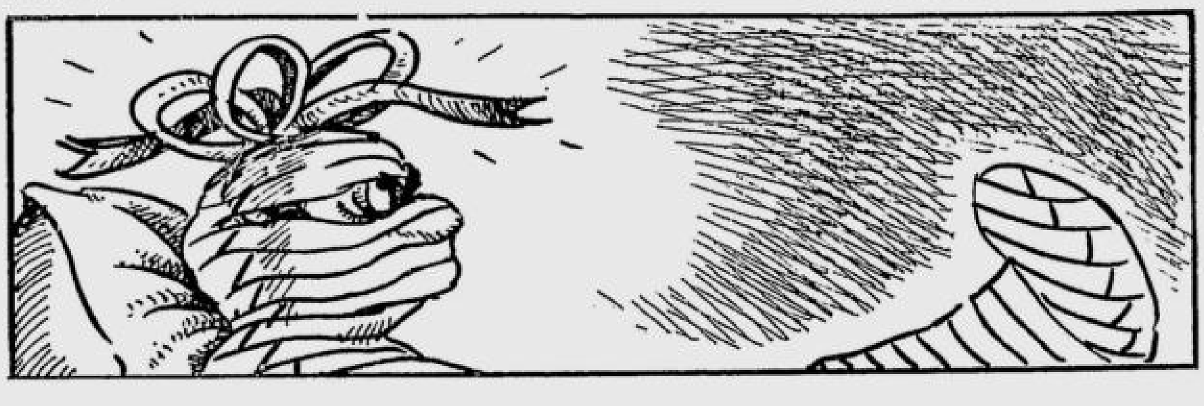
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


BAKIT KAYO NARITO MISS STARLET/SINGER?
UPANG MAG-ENTERTAIN DITO SA MGA TAO SA EDSA 3!!!
AND ANG MASASABI NINYO SA NANGYAYARI NGAYON DITO SA EDSA?!
NGAYON LANG PO AKO NAGKAROON NG GANITO KARAMING AUDIENCE, SISTER BONI!!! FEEL KO CONCERT QUEEN AKO!!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU & TATUM MILAMBILING



Jamming with Blast Ople

(From page C8)

To Erap supporters...

Joey: Violence is not the answer.

Jason: Learn from history—a revolution will not succeed without the middle class.

Marie: We shall not be a banana republic.

To mothers on Mother's Day...

All: Hi, Mom!

Top five songs to dedicate to Erap...

Mikey: "We are the Champions" by Queen.

Marie: "Loser" by Beck.

Jason: "I Fought the Law" by The Clash.

Marie: *Ano yung* famous Sex Pistols *na* song?

Jason: "Anarchy in the UK"?

Marie: *Ayun.*

Mikey: "Revolution" by the Beatles... "To All the Girls I Loved Before."

(Everybody cracks up)

What do you guys think of rap rock?

Jason: Hehehehe!

Marie: Define rap rock.

Joey: Yeah.

Jason: They're all lumped into this one genre, but I don't think the Deftones sound like Korn at all.

Marie: *Di ba may* New York *at saka* L.A.? Like, *kakaiba.*

Jason: Gangsta *na yan ah!*

Joey: No comment.

Jason: I like Deftones and like I got into Korn way before everyone else and, like, *nagsawa ako.*

Marie: *Naks*, pioneer!

Joey: Trendsetter! Hahahaha!

How about Napster?

Marie: It still works.

Mikey: *Pero* if you're going to download albums like Collective Soul, *ba't ka pa magna-*Napster, *di ba*?

Jason: Collective Soul *pare.*

(Everybody chuckles)

Mikey: I mean, I use Napster *kasi* the stuff I find there are not in albums anywhere, like the live versions of Juliana Hatfield.

Marie: True. You can download stand-up comedies and movie themes and music from the 1940s. You can get the soundtrack over Napster. It's bad *naman* if you download the whole album and you burn it on a CD and sell it as your own. That's bad. For me, if you're gonna download one or two songs of a band you've never heard before and you like their music, then buy their album. Then you give the artist the royalties they deserve.

With reports from Maui V. Reyes

E-mail the author at tammydavid@pinoycentral.com

Scenes from Mexico

NEXT Alliance's "The Scene" event magically transformed the Alabang Town Center into the country of Mexico. No visas, passports or airplane tickets required to travel around the world with "The Scene" team.

Scenes from Mexico included the fabulous Mexican Jumping Velcro Wall by Penshoppe, wall climbing on the 30-ft Planet X/Nokia Alta de Pader, a scrumptious Mexican Taco bar by the INQUIRER's 2bU!, cool sounds from the summer's hottest Monster Radio RX 93.1, street dancing from The Crew of UP, jamming with MTV Phils., and bands such as Rivermaya, ReVibe, Cousin Ed, Mayflower, Joshua Tree, Free Beer, Playground and Moonstar88, who performed their hit single, "Torete."

Teen Phils. was at "The Scene" with their magazines, the Philippine Tattoo Artists Guild did the body piercing and Henna Tattooing, Body and Nail Painting by Lea de Belen, free hair painting by Planet X and JVC showed all of the Planet X television shows.

In theme with the country of Mexico were tequila- and beer-drinking contests plus nacho and burrito-eating contests by Tia Maria's, Tequila Joe's, Miggy's Tacos, San Mig and Fast Track. Winners received gift certificates.

Andale, andale to "The Scene" when they travel to the Bahamas on May 21-27. Enjoy beach and reggae nights at the Alabang Town Center with Next Alliance and its "Scene" team partners: Penshoppe, the INQUIRER's 2bU!, Planet X, Teen Phils., Nokia, MTV Phils. and Monster Radio RX 93.1.

Be seen at "The Scene." For bands, dancers or singers who wish to perform at "The Scene," fax biodata and repertoire at 634-3230.

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CALLING Class '97 Theresians. Renew your ties with old friends and classmates at a reunion on May 19, 6:30 p.m., at the Woodside Homes Clubhouse, New Manila. Call Michelle Gamez at (0917) 842-0311 or 721-6176 for details.

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WHEN YOU KNOW

Jamming with Blast Ople

TEXT AND PHOTOS BY TAMMY DAVID
2bU! Correspondent

FOR THE THIRD time, I was such a mess in an interview. And I once thought I could interview Trent Reznor. After last Saturday, I changed my mind. I was faced [again] with the difficult task of taking 2bU!'s music honcho's job of interviewing. I thought I could get away with the usual generic questions, and I mistook them for being a political activist type of band—whether it's Rage Against the Machine or The Ouster band of the famed "Huling-Huli" Edsa Dos dance anthem.

"Actually *hindi kami aktibista,*" says Marie Jamora, the drummer.

"We're not really apathetic, you know, but we're sorry to disappoint people. We just wanted a funny name and [it] has nothing to do with political affiliations or anything like that," says Jason Caballa, one of the guitarists, when I asked them questions about politics.

"We're just a showband," says Quark Henares, singer of Blast Ople.

QUARK Henares a.k.a. Raul Rocket a.k.a LA Lopez on vox, Mikey Amistoso a.k.a. Gringo Punasan a.k.a Smokey Manoloto on bass, Jason Caballa a.k.a. Mephisto Guingona a.k.a. J. Sin on noise guitar, Joey Odulio a.k.a. Mike Villegas a.k.a. Angelo Villegas on citizen guitar, Marie Jamora a.k.a. Nikki Cozitstings a.k.a. Jambalaya Madrigal on drums

> Blast Ople is really just the band's pathetic excuse to release all the stress piled up during the week and make people deaf by doing it

"An underground showband," adds Mikey Amistoso, the bassist.

An underground showband since they've been doing mostly covers of songs by bands like Jon Spencer Blues Explosion, the Pixies, Bis and Flin Flon. Everyone, except for the Pixies, is unknown to me and most of the Limp Bizkit-loving people I know.

They also have two original songs called "Masturbating Bear," a song about autoeroticism among animals from various ecosystems, and the sell-out song, their love letter asking Pepsi to sponsor them. It would take them 10 years, according to Marie, to come up with an album.

Funny name and soon-to-be showband

The birth of Blast Ople has two versions. According to Quark, it started with a joke bassist Mikey made about forming a band just to use the name Blast Ople, a name his cousin gave. The other version, according to Jason, started one Friday when they were watching the battle of the bands at the Ateneo, which they also organized.

"Itchy Worms played and we wanted to see them play. We were disgusted at the fact that *siguro* 95 percent of the bands that played were all showbands. *Nag-usap kami sa labas noon at nagbuo kami ng banda* just to screw up events like that, you know. Have fun. Make noise!" says Jason.

"*Parang*, the bands were showbands and so we decided to make our own showband since we all have our respective bands. Blast Ople is really just a pathetic excuse to release all the stress piled up during the week and make people deaf by doing it," says Quark, who manages Chico Science, Monsterbot and Ciudad. Jason and Joey Odulio, the other guitarist who plays for Twisted Halo, and Marie, play for Boldstar.

"In our own bands, we have so much responsibilities. Here there's, like, no rules, no pressure," says Joey.

"There's no practice!" adds Quark.

The last practice they had was last November when they just plugged in their instruments and played for a while, watched a couple of DVDs, had dinner and the others took off for gigs. "So *yung lumalabas*, wala *kaming napupuntahan,*" says Mikey.

But for some, the "good-for-nothing" jamming session is a release, a sort of therapy. "For some people, *parang* life-changing experience *yung* Blast Ople 'cause we always suck so much and anyone can play with us. And for everyone who starts jamming with us, whether it be Donna from Fatal Posporos or Raymond from the Eraserheads…." says Quark.

A famous figure you guys want to jam with in your "therapy session."

Quark: Willie Revillame.

Mikey: Pass… uh.

Jason: Jun Lopito, *pare, ewan ko.*

Marie: Joey *muna*. I'm thinking.

Joey: Gary Valenciano.

Jason: Cynthia Alexander. *Yon tama!*

Marie: Melody of Sugar Hiccup.

Favorite bands right now? Influences?

Jason: At the Drive In.

Marie: Placebo.

Joey: The Cure.

Marie: *Pa rin*! Hahahaha!

Mikey: *Ako*, Lemonheads *pa rin*.

Jason: *Pero* the tie that binds us together is Sonic Youth and the Pixies.

Did you go to the MTV Alternative Nation tour five years ago?

All: Yeah.

Mikey: I lost my shoe. *Ang tanga-tanga ko kasi, naka*-moccasins, so Foo Fighters, yeah! *Tapos isa na lang sapatos ko* so the whole concert—Sonic Youth, Beastie Boys—*naka* socks *lang yung isang paa ko.* I was in front and after the concert I found [my shoe] at the back. I think someone threw it and Dave Grohl threw it back.

Marie: I got to their bedrooms. I saw them in their underwear.

Mikey: She met Dave Grohl.

Are you guys registered voters?

Jason: I am.

Marie: Well, I think I am.

Jason: Joey *rin*, I think. Oh, I know he's not. I know he didn't vote the last time…

Quark: I'm not.

Mikey: I'm not, but if ever… 13-0!

Marie: 13-0!

Jason: *Ako hindi siguro*, I don't think I'd be voting for 13 people. I'm not voting for… I won't say names *pero* I think there are certain people.

Quark: *Huuu, ayaw mo lang si* Obet.

Jason: *Uy, hindi yon ha! Swak si* Obet *sa akin pero* I don't approve of everyone in the PPC. I'm not saying names…

Marie: *Baka mamatay 'to eh.*

Jason: *Pero yung* sure *sa akin si* Joker, Obet, Flavier.

Quark: Chato I like.

Jason: And Tañada.

Mikey: *Si* Winnie Monsod.

Jason: *Ayun.*

Quark: Winnie Monsod is cool… so is Chato.

Okay, name association. Miriam...

Marie: You're giving us too much time to think.

Joey: A witch thing. (Text joke about Miriam that she did jump off the plane but her broom saved her.)

Quark: *Eroplano.*

Jason: *Topak.*

Marie: Afro.

Impeachment...

Quark: Erap.

Mikey: Davide.

Jason: *Bitin.*

Marie: The movie.

Joey: Actually, the movie also.

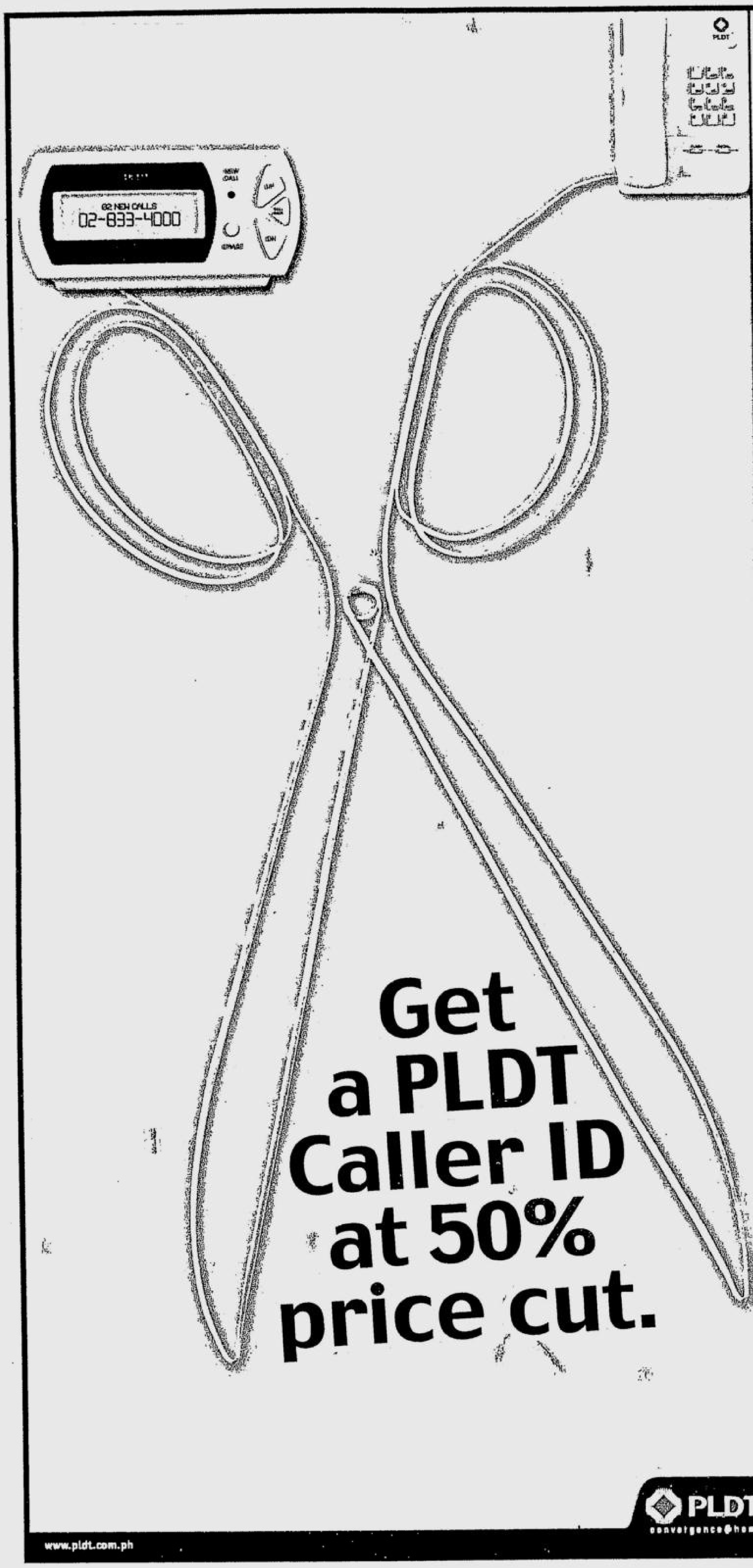
Edsa Tres...

Jason: Think… just one word, *yun lang*.

Joey: Yeah, think not for yourself but for your country.

Marie: One word: Migrate.

THE UNDERGROUND/ p.C7



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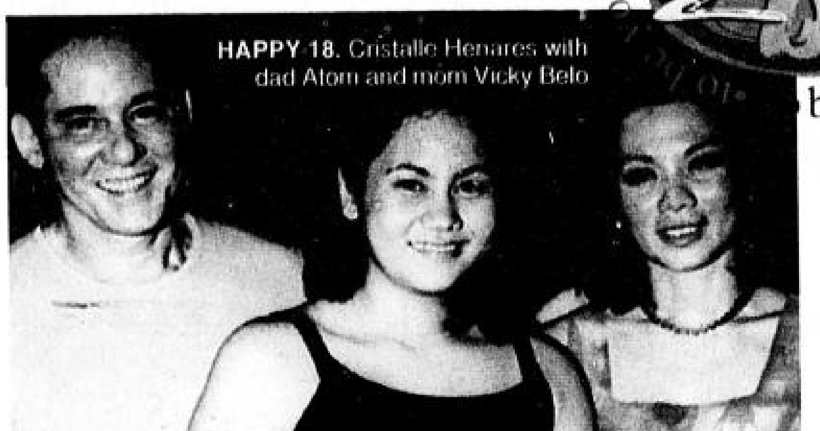
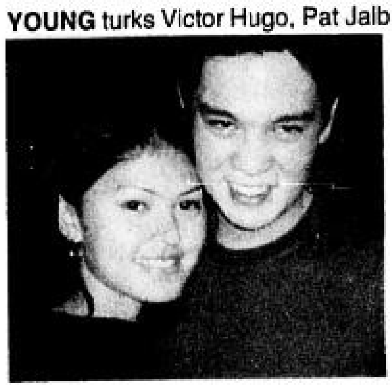
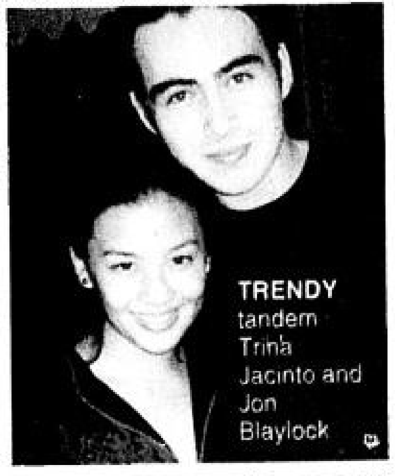

HAPPY 18. Cristalle Henares with dad Atom and mom Vicky Belo

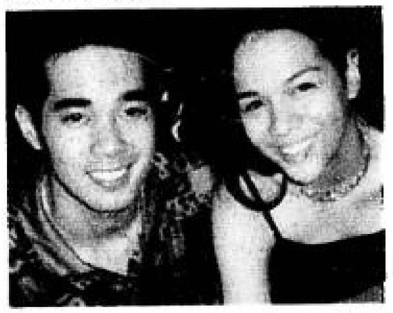
QUIRKY *kuya* Quark Henares

THE CELEBRATOR with friends Chippy Andulon, Marvin Go, Ramon Galang and Jason Soong

A Balinese ball for Cristalle


FACE VALUE. Marga Arenas and Mike Marquez


TRENDY tandem Trina Jacinto and Jon Blaylock


COOL coosome Chino Jayme and Tessa Santos

ASIAN SPICE. Pam Tanjangco, Tracy Sugay, Keesa Ocampo and Maia Martinez

SUMMER smiles from Joleon Tañada and Nica Hechanova

TEXT AND PHOTOS BY TIM YAP

WHEN Cristalle Henares was 8 years old, she was strolling inside Robinsons Galleria with mom, celebrity liposuction doctor Vicky Belo, when she saw a giant merry-go-round on a cake. "When I turn 18, I want something like this, Mommy." She also wanted a formal candlelight dinner—the works.

So Mommy took down mental notes, excited for baby Cristalle's future debut.

Fast-forward to Cristalle's fast approaching 16th birthday. Mom Vicky and dad, the ageless NU 107 top honcho Atom Henares, planned a surprise party at the Polo Club on a Tuesday.

Cristalle, having no idea of the surprise, all of a sudden invites her friends to come to her house on a Friday, therefore creating confusion among her parents and guests. This made Vicky decide to tell her sweet sixteener.

Enter well-loved son, the inimitable Quark Henares: "Don't tell her, Mom!" But she did.

So Tuesday there was Cristalle's sweet 16th "surfer themed-shebang," complete with beach boys and bikinis, surf boards and even fireworks at the night's peak.

17 going on 18

Fast-forward once more to this year, Cristalle, now 17 going on 18. Mom Vicky was more excited than ever. Then Cristalle decided, after several debut horror stories, not to have one. She disliked the whole traditional ceremony, preferring a simple gathering to an ostentatious one.

"Don't do this to me," Vicky thought. So, since she really wanted to throw her daughter a debut party, she (again along with Atom) decided once again to make it a surprise.

She wrote down all her mental notes of what Cristalle wanted for her debut. "Formal party" was what stuck to her mind. "I want *kuya* to read a poem for me" was another that she remembers.

So, she and Atom formed a team—composed of design geniuses Cynthia and Ivy Almario, Yong Nieva and her daughter's favorite *tita*, Rosanna Henares-Angeles.

Several formal venues and arrangements (from band performers to fireworks suppliers) later, Cristalle came home from a party and was overheard saying, "I want a party that is really relaxed, with hammocks and pillows all over."

Of course, this sent the whole team into a panic. It further escalated when her *lolo*, Ike Belo, at a dinner before her birthday asked, "Quark, where are the lyrics for the song that I have to sing for Cristalle's party?"

"Don't do this to me." It was Crystalle's turn to get frustrated

What Cristalle wants

So, the loving parents that they are, Vicky and Atom had to reveal everything, and revise the whole battle plan because having a formal sit-down dinner was just not their daughter's personality.

So now, with their daughter, the whole team was set to make the best debut party—the party that Cristalle really wanted—fun and laid-back.

They chose the gardens of Puerto Real and had Thai food catered by Flavors and Spices. Cynthia Almario decorated the venue with Asian-inspired tents, exotic flowers and glowing candles. She surrounded the place with giant multicolored silk pillows which, along with fans, doubled as souvenirs from the Balinese-inspired debut party.

Family and friends from Luke 18 and Antioch churches, her pals from Ateneo de Manila University, Assumption high school, Montessori and Fame theater group were fully present.

Instead of the usual rock and pop bands, Cristalle chose Beng Calma, the Makiling Ensemble and Pinikpikan, all ethnic performers.

But what took the cake, aside from the games via video conceptualized by Cristalle's Tita Rosanna, was the song number, sung to her by the men in her life. His *lolos*, lawyer Enrique Belo and Larry Henares, dad Atom and brother Quark all sang "You Are the Sunshine of My Life" with matching choreography at that!

To top it off, a 10-minute fireworks display highlighted the evening. It seemed like New Year's Eve. Mom Vicky and dad Atom, not to mention brother Quark, were all happy together.

This party didn't have a giant merry-go-round on the cake but, surely, it was more than what Cristalle wished for.

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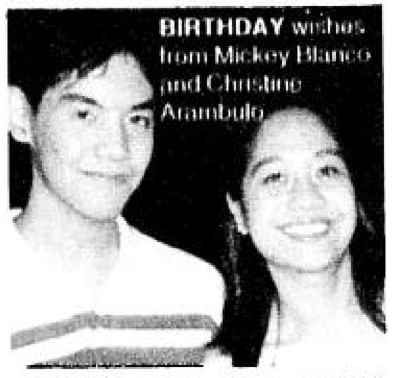
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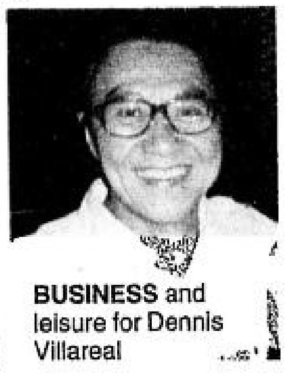
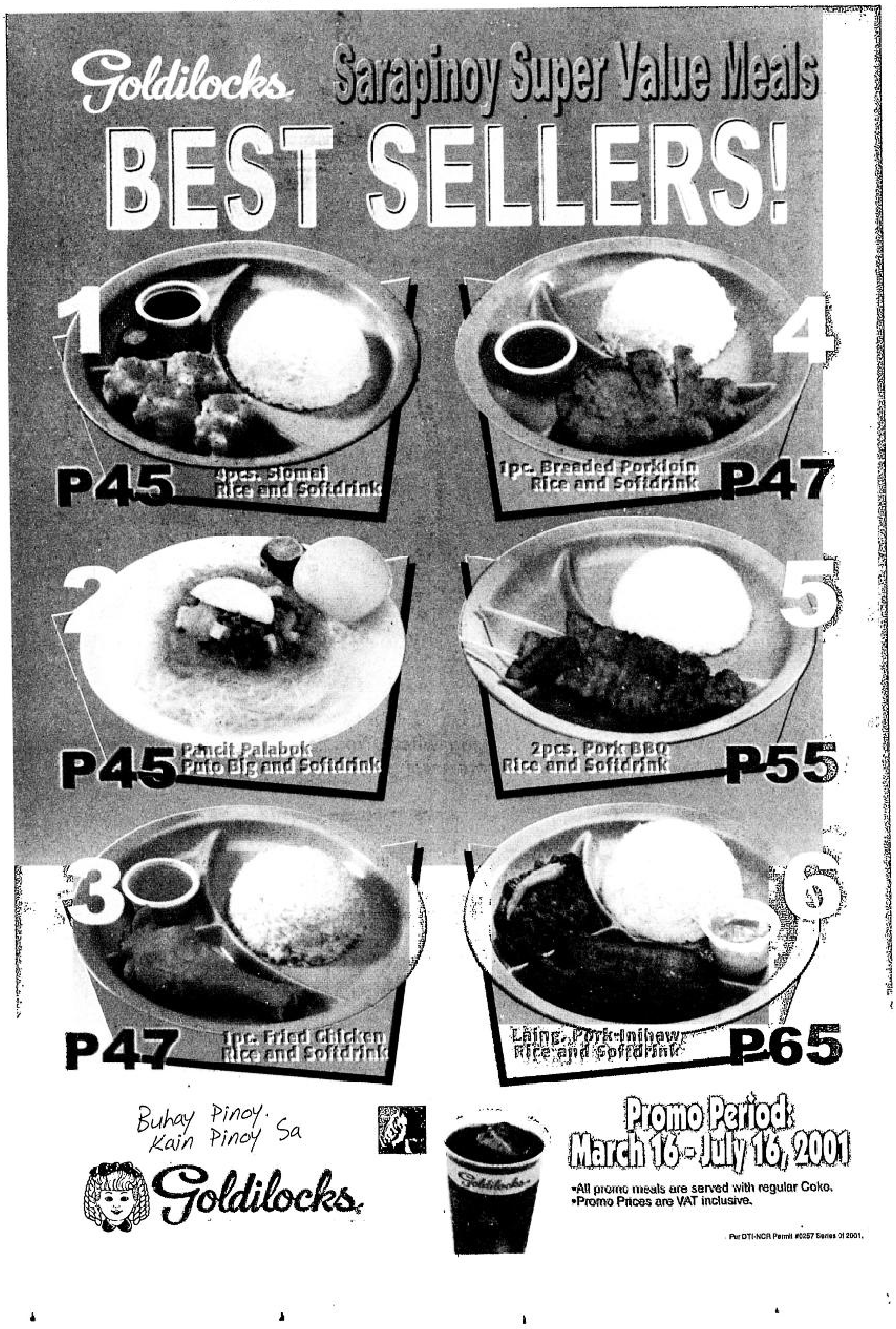

BUSINESS and leisure for Dennis Villareal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Ricky Martin's Singapore swing

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MTV TIMES TWO. Frank Brown and Francis Lumen

PHOTOS: TIM YAP

SINGAPORE party sling

SINGAPORE—Clad in a white, wing-tipped shirt, several buttons undone to expose his chest, **Ricky Martin** wore a Rosary around his neck.

If this were any other artist, moralists would have screamed "Blasphemy!" already. But no, this was not just anyone. Latino singing and dancing sensation, modern-day male style icon and Menudo survivor Ricky Martin sang and swayed his hands and hips to his audience's extreme delight like there was no tomorrow.

At the Jubilee Hall of the Raffles Hotel in Singapore, an exclusive crowd of 300 or so partyphiles gathered for a special performance of the Sony Music artist for MTV's sixth anniversary in the region.

Sony Music's hot, hot honcho, **Wally Chamsay**, led our delegation composed of yours truly, Young Star's **Ginggay Joven**, the Bulletin's **Maan Ilustre** and well-loved, former Sony PR **Cristina Castillo**, who now works for MTV's talent division and based in squeaky-clean Singapore.

After the cocktails held at the lobby, everybody proceeded to the concert venue, eagerly anticipating the "Live and Loaded" show. If you didn't know the crowd was going to watch Ricky Martin, you would think they were out for a night at the opera.

When the lights dimmed, everyone became quiet. "Riiicckkkkyyyy!!!" screamed a female fan. "Aaaaahhhhh!!!" some followed.

UNO, DOS, TRES. Ricky Martin... superstar!

Newfound Elvis

Then silence. Seconds later, a vision in black and white appeared. Pandemonium broke out. Ricky started his set with "She Bangs" from his "Sound Loaded" album. And the earlier formal and decorous Asian audience suddenly behaved like wards in an asylum, shrieking and howling like crazy, paying homage to this generation's newfound **Elvis Presley**.

After seeing MTV Phils.' **Francis Lumen** take his tie off (Don't worry. That was the only piece of clothing he took off, lest he wants Ricky upstaged—not!) and spin it midair à la "Full Monty," I stood up and shook my bon bon left and right.

My seatmates, the journalists that they are, were anxiously taking down notes. This was after they regained consciousness—for 5-10 minutes they seemed to be paralyzed with wide-eyed wonder, mouths agape, hearts a-pounding.

Martin then introduced Sony coartist **Coco Lee**, clad in "animé-listic" proportions. They sang "Nobody Wants to be Lonely," eyes locked on each other—Casanova embracing lady Pikachu.

"Let's forget who we are tonight—let's dance!" And everybody danced along with him, all 45 minutes of electrifying entertainment.

From the grace he exuded swaying his pelvis to the zestful suaveness that he radiated when catching the microphone stand with his feet, Ricky Martin is, indeed, a superstar class act.

She Bangs

After the show, our very own veejay **Donita** and Indonesian import Sara called MTV Asia president **Frank Brown** as they thanked the Sony artists who went out of their way to grace the sound station's anniversary fete.

After all that "she-banging," a thank-you party was held at nearby Long Bar, where music industry bigwigs engaged in a random booze and schmooze fest. Here, along with costumed characters and Singapore-based models, the city's party set watched the MTV Ricky Martin television spectacle.

Clasping his hands, he bowed to his captive crowd in thanks and said, "It is this stillness in my heart that makes me want to give my all and share the vibe."

Indeed, he bangs.

SHAKE your bon bon livin' la vida loca.

OFF to St. Tropez they go

"I GO crazy 'coz she looks like a flower and she stings like a bee..."

MTV's Peter Bullard

YOUR columnist with veejays Donita and Sara in Singapore

SINGAPORE SENSATION. Nadya Hutagalong and Lum May Yee

"NOBODY wants to be lonely..." Sony artists Coco Lee and Ricky Martin

UN SABOR ANIMAL. She bangs, she bangs.

PINOYS PARTY! Arnold Co, Ginggay Joven and Maan Ilustre

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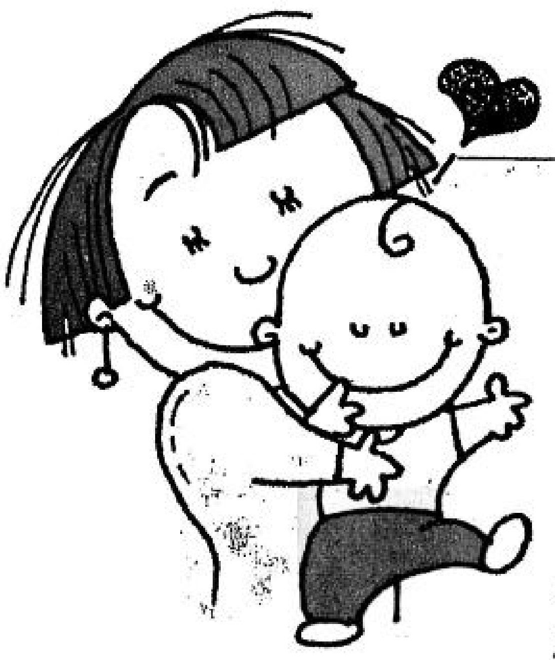
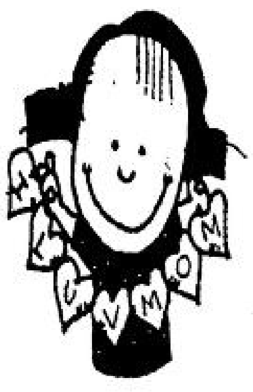


Here's looking at you, Mom



They're all different, very different. We mean our mothers. The 2bU! moms are quite an assorted bunch—the country *nanay*, the unmarried woman, the mama whose daughter is her clone, the working mom. Indulge us, please, as we tell you about our mothers

I THINK I left the college interviewer bewildered when I answered one of her last questions. It was the height of the impeachment fiasco when she asked me who, among all the women I knew, did I admire most? I had an intuition that she was expecting me to "name-drop" and mention the prominent women during that time, like Sen. Loren Legarda, Cory Aquino or Mareng Winnie Monsod. Instead, I answered: my mom.

At first glance, she looks as if she's only a few years older than I am. But in truth, I'm not even half her age. It's funny how some people mistake us for sisters. I'm sure that's a real treat for her. She's not an extraordinary person. My mom does not possess magical powers or uncanny abilities yet every bit of her is special. What makes her that, you ask? We speak one language.

My mom and I, including my not-so-little brother, may remind you of characters in a screwball comedy. How we fool around and call each other horrible monikers seem straight out of a sitcom. Don't get me wrong, my mom is not a clown but she's not a drill sergeant either. For instance, I can listen to Metallica and Pantera without someone banging on my door. She lets me go to Razorback or Wolfgang gigs without any hint of hesitation. She patiently waits while me and my brothers raid the shelves of Virgin Megastore. There's no such thing as curfew in our house. I was even the one who imposed a curfew on myself. My mom gives us plenty of leeway to do our own thing and to grow up on our own. I can honestly say that by doing that, she has confidently given us the option to choose, to discipline ourselves and to stand on our own. By example, she taught me to aim high and be a strong individual. I admire my mom for the person that she is; someone who's strong and fearless and yet able to play for laughs with her kids at the end of the day.

Kris Sevilla

Ultra protection

I MUST have written more than 10 songs about my mother. And I don't write mushy, "I love you" songs, mind you. And no one will ever, ever, *ever* be able to hear or read those songs I safely store in random notebooks and word files.

You can pretty much picture the relationship we have. It's not that she has written songs about me, too (well, at least I don't think so). But every teenager has gone through a "I hate my parents" stage. I just happen to be stuck in that phase right now.

I am the youngest of seven children, four of whom are already married. I'm the only one living with my mom, and if I wrote down all that's happened in my family, I'd take up the entire Lifestyle section (and there would be a second issue to boot). So it's safe to say my mom is ultra-protective of me. Now that's an understatement. My mom is very, very, *very* protective of me. No matter how many times she tells me she trusts me, there are times when she gets this close to attaching a homing device to my underwear.

There may be some pros. My "forever stuck in midlife-crisis" mom picks me up at almost every party, be it at 2 a.m., just to assure me I have a ride home. She pays for my education. She dyes my blue hair. She puts food on the table, clothes on my back and roof over my head. On top of that, she put an air-conditioner in my room, as well as attended to my medical needs when, well, I needed them.

Of course, there were also bad moments. Countless screaming and crying sessions wherein I'd lie in bed all alone, listening to my music and throw stuff around the room...basically anything I could get my hands on. The latest episode would be about her not allowing me to go to San Francisco to watch U2 live and interview the band. Because I was a minor, there were tons of complications with the record company and DSWD. To make a long story short, after two weeks of phone calls with the record company, DSWD and INQUIRER, my life was ruined and I had to pass on the bragging rights to another teen writer who was sent instead of me. I'm not saying that was the worst that has happened. I've had to turn down a Ricky Martin show in Singapore and other events in the past (well, maybe not as bogus as this one) because of this. Because of her "right to a peace of mind" claim. Because I was a minor. Because...I don't know...just *because*.

I know most of you are thinking what a b*tch I am to be writing these things about my mother. Or maybe what an airhead I am for telling you all about my missed opportunities. The fact of the matter is, we're all stuck with the mothers we have, and there's nothing we can do about it. The thing to do is probably correct those mistakes when we ourselves have our own little tykes running around the house. My mother says I should stop making fun of her quirky habits and her over-protectiveness, because I too will be a parent one day. Even though I vow I will never, ever strangle my kid and keep her on a leash even when she's 4 months shy of turning 18, there are still things I'd like to inherit from my mother.

Her strength to break away from society's expectations, to free herself from a life she thought she was doomed to live until she died, and how she lives everyday with the hurt and pain she has, but has never tried to end it all just for the sake of her daughter. Those and maybe the fact that she doesn't look a day over 50 (believe me...I got guy friends who think you're hot, Mom).

Maui V. Reyes

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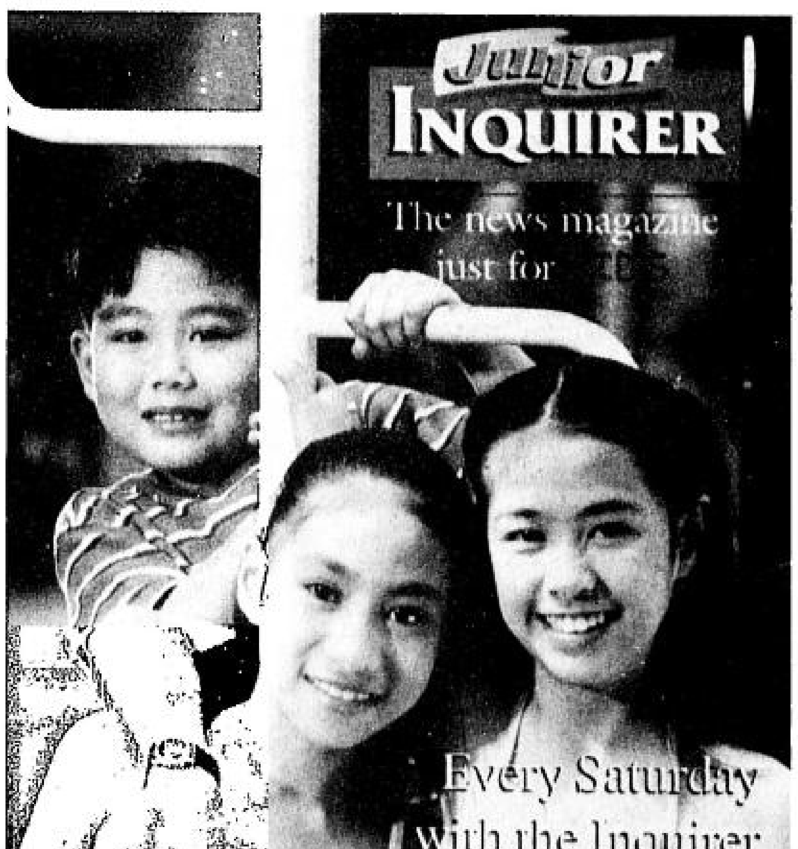

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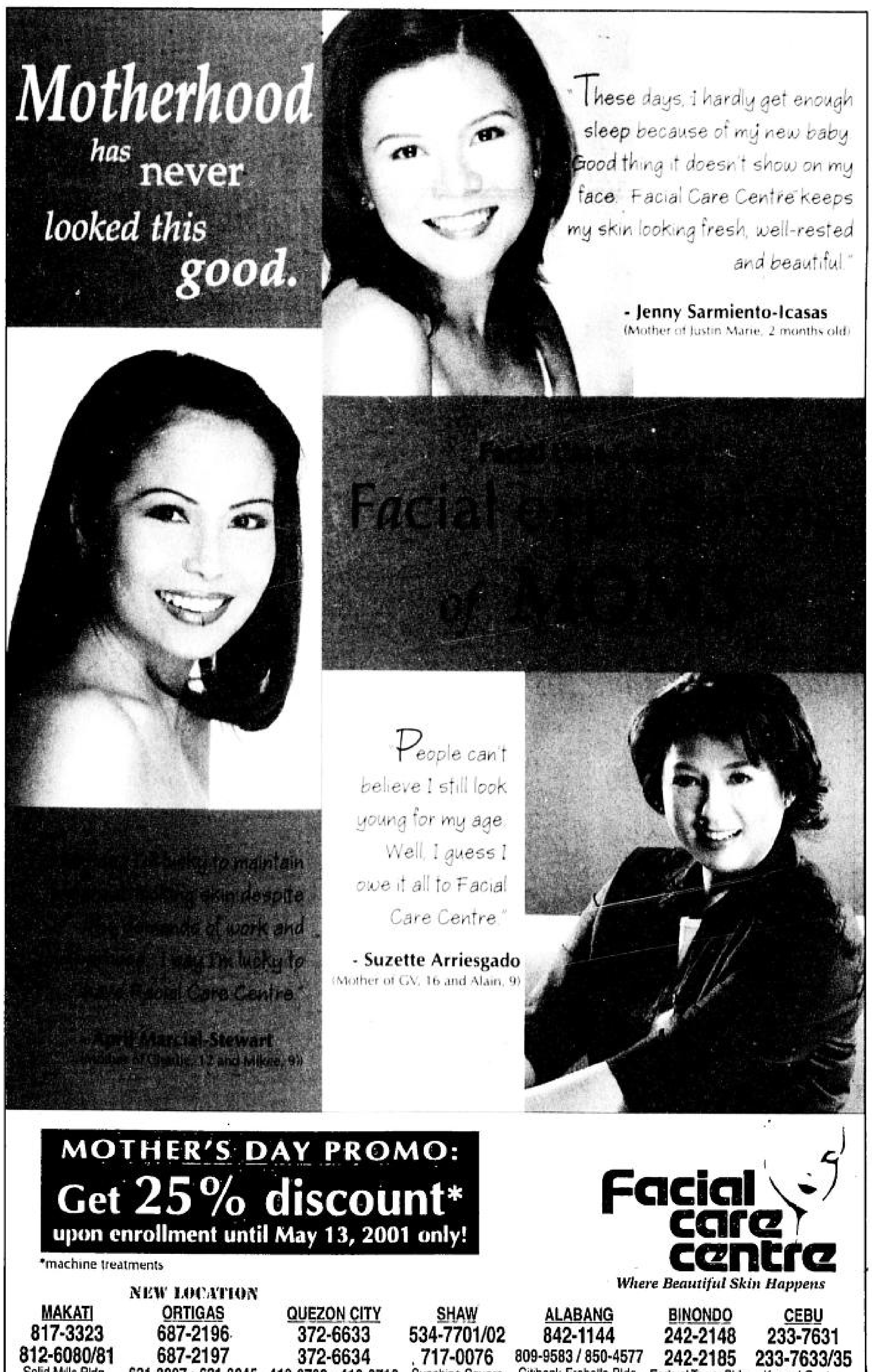

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- Jenny Sarmiento-Icasas
(Mother of Justin Marie, 2 months old)

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- April Marcial-Stewart
(Mother of Charlie, 12 and Mikee, 9)

"People can't believe I still look young for my age. Well, I guess I owe it all to Facial Care Centre."
- Suzette Arriesgado
(Mother of GV, 16 and Alain, 9)

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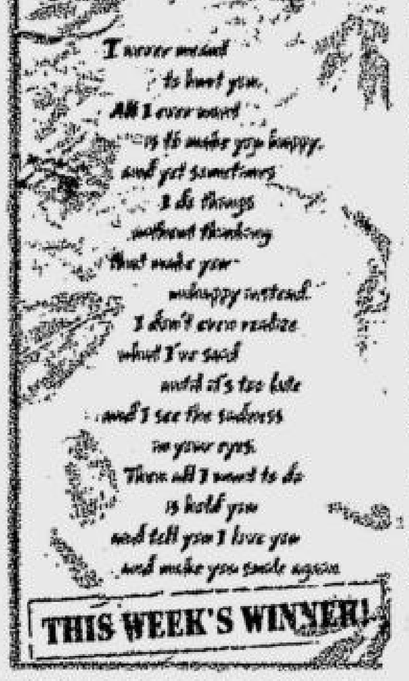

I never meant
to hurt you.
All I ever want
is to make you happy.
and yet sometimes
I do things
without thinking
that make you
unhappy instead.
I don't even realize
what I've said
until it's too late
and I see the sadness
in your eyes.
Then all I want to do
is hold you
and tell you I love you
and make you smile again.

THIS WEEK'S WINNER!

Inside:
I want to take you far away from any hurt... especially any I caused.

This is the most memorable card I have ever received!

I give a lot of **Between You and Me** cards to people who are close to me. Once, out of the blue, I gave one to my mommy. She was so happy and surprised. She has seen me buying **Between You and Me** cards for my friends but she never expected me to buy one for her.

My mom is not good at expressing her feelings towards me. We have what other people might describe as a "traditional" mother-daughter relationship. We never joke around. She never tells me she loves me because she finds it too corny.

So you can just imagine my disbelief when she handed me this card. As I was reading it, tears kept pouring down uncontrollably. Thru this card, she was able to say how much she loves and cares for me. It shows that she can also be cheesy and baduy at times.

After 21 years (sa wakas!), now I know how she feels about me.

This coming Mother's Day, I want my mommy to know that I also love her, that I am sorry and that I am thankful that she's my mommy.

- Madeline Co
566 Sto. Cristo St.
Binondo, Manila

ExTeNdeD!

Because you asked for it, we're extending **Hallmark's Between You & Me "Cardspeak"** Contest! Send us the most memorable Between You & Me card you received and tell us why it's "sent" in 300 words or less. If your entry is chosen, your story will be printed in this section of 2bU! And if that's not enough, you also get to win two cool Swatch watches! (That's one for you and one for the person who sent you the card). Mail your entries to: *Filstar Distributors Corporation 3/F Team Pacific Bldg. 13 Jose Cruz St., Ugong, Pasig City 1604*. Include your name, address & contact number. Contest ends June 13, 2001. So keep 'em coming! Catch **Joe D'Mango's Love Notes** every Friday (10:00 am) at **WAVE 89.1** as he reads your favorite Between You & Me cards and every Sunday in the Inquirer's Lifestyle section.

www.hallmark.com

Congrats, Madeline!
You and your mom won this!

No regrets

WRITING this essay might just be the biggest challenge of my life. I don't know where to start. I don't know how to end. My mom is such a complex person—I fear that I would run out of words to describe her and what she means to me.

When I was a scrawny little brat, I was really attached to my mom. While my classmates happily skipped off to class, I stood there in front of the school gate, letting out ear-piercing howls as I watched my mom leave. Everyone in first grade probably remembers me as the kid who wouldn't stop bawling for her mother. My homeroom teacher then still can't forget that to this day.

I was so attached to my mom that I went through a psycho phase. I constantly thought I would lose her. I guess this came around the time I realized what death was. That became my No. 1 enemy. I remember nights of staying awake, watching her, constantly checking to see if she was breathing. The constant rising of her deep pink blanket was sheer comfort for me—my mother was alive. She was still with me.

A few days ago, I was digging through old photo albums, trying to find a picture of my mom. There was hardly any. I had tons of photos—and so did my brother. We had photos together and photos with relatives, but we hardly had any photos with our mother. That tiny fact basically sums up her existence. That's my mom. She would rather that her kids shine—while she stayed in the background.

My mom is no saint, let me make that clear. She's not perfect. She constantly loses her keys. She never stops texting—even while she's driving. Before she leaves the house, she would model shoes in front of us asking, "This one or this one? This one or this one?" and she wouldn't stop until you get all red in the face and you start screaming that no one would really stare at her shoes.

When I call her from the other house before I go out, she asks the same questions again and again—"Did you eat? Do you have money? Who are you going with? Where are you going? What time will you be home? Where will you go tomorrow?" Which would lead to my inevitable answer, "Ma! I haven't left yet!"

She constantly makes my phone ring—the signal that I have to report to her where I am, who I'm with and what I'm doing—even when I'm out of town. And when I'm home, she calls a lot—even asking me to disconnect when I'm using the Internet—and when we talk, she really has nothing to say. She just wants the assurance of hearing our voices.

She has a flair for melodrama and is skilled when it comes to giving endless monologues that are sure to spark guilt in me and my brother. She thinks too much about what other people will say. She's too forgiving—to the point that the people around her take advantage of that. Sometimes, she treats me like I'm 7.

But when I think about it, these tiny flaws are things to be overlooked, especially when I think about everything she's done and continues doing for us.

Who else would have the patience to pick me up from work at 2 a.m.? Who has been accepting every tantrum I've thrown the past 20 years? Who would try to forget her fears just to make me happy? I know that every time I go out-of-town or abroad for work, she gets scared out of her wits, but she swallows everything because she doesn't want to see me get frustrated. She's always been protective—but not to the point of stifling us and the people who we want to be.

To say that my mom is a martyr will not be a lie. She stayed in a marriage that made her unhappy just so people will not say my brother and I came from a broken family. Until one day, when I was 13, I finally snapped and told her, "If you're not happy anymore, leave." I would much rather have separated parents and live in peace than live in a house where you're waiting for battles to ensue every single day of your life.

Don't think that our life was rife with drama. Yes, there were those moments, but I had a great childhood—and I have great memories with my mom.

When I was a kid, my mom let me perm my hair. Not because I'd looked good (I looked like a Christmas tree, according to my uncle.) but because I wanted to.

Despite her being strict, my mom basically lets me do what I want. Of course, the first time I went to the mall without a *yaya* was when I was in college, but hey, that's a different story.

My mom's a big kid. We have wrestling matches. She likes the PlayStation and No Doubt. She has friends my age, believe it or not.

My mom never instilled in me the value of saving money. Don't save money, that was her rule when I was a kid. (Of course, my dad likes to think that mom is a big spender. I would like to disagree. I can't even remember the last time she shopped for herself.) Eat, eat, eat. She always feared that we would get hungry—sometimes to the point of paranoia. When I was in grade school, she used to hide an extra wallet in my bag—for emergency purposes.

This was in grade school. Now that my brother's 16 and (I like to think) I'm an adult, she sometimes feels that we don't need her. That we're growing up too fast. That we're shutting her out. She once said to me, "I don't know you anymore."

I have to admit, I sometimes get preoccupied with my own life. But still, how can she say that? Despite what people see on the outside, I will always be her little girl. The girl who refused to try on clothes in department stores, the girl who never stopped brushing her teeth for more than an hour in hopes that maybe her mom would change her mind about getting her teeth pulled out.

My mom had me when she was 20—that, for me, is a big sacrifice. I'm 20 now—and I cannot fathom the thought of giving up my plans just to raise a family.

She had a lot of things to look forward to when she was young. She had and still has talent—great talent. She used to write and direct plays when she was in school. She sings. She plays the guitar. She gave all that up for me and my brother. She didn't finish school to have a family. Sometimes, people talk about her; *sayang*, they say.

She could have built a career, she would have been great at anything she chose to do. Yeah, she could have been. But she chose to be a mom. And she's great at it. Now I don't think there's anything *sayang* about that.

Pam Pastor

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Opposites

IF THERE are two things my mother and I have in common, they are our looks and our love for the Beatles. In everything else, we're total opposites.

My mom was born and raised in the province with the usual Pinoy values and God-fearing views in life. She was brought up by a strict grandmother; she was an obedient kid. Life was simple. I was born in a city prevalent with crime, poverty and loads of distractions. I am a materialistic brat from the metropolis who looks up to almost everybody—from my sisters to Thom Yorke—and gets easily influenced by others. That ticks my mom off because she thinks I value the opinions of other people more than hers,

Lately I've been spiritually dead and Mass has become such a drag. I know I will rebuild my relationship with God as soon as I'm ready to repent. So imagine dealing with my "religious-to-the-bone" mother who forces us to go to Mass on a sunny weekday. Because of that I even considered becoming an atheist. Thankfully, I got a lot of advice from my kind CLE teachers.

But I understand my mother for being what she is. She had a provincial upbringing. Her father raised her in the manner he thought best. My mother would always tell stories of how her *Tatay* would give her lots of tickets to the Beatles shows in Japan but prevented her from studying abroad or even Manila which was her ultimate dream, besides a beautiful rest house. Her father was strict but when it came time for her to raise her own kids, she didn't mind if I came home at 2 a.m. from the Bush concert and I was only 14 years old.

My mom and I argue all the time because we have different views. Sometimes she treats me like an adult and sometimes like a kid. She's just doing her job as a mom, I would always tell myself whenever she got into my nerves.

My mom may not be the greatest mother on earth but I think it is quite an achievement to be able to stand an arrogant daughter who brings home bad grades and asks her to buy CDs every week.

Tammy David

A young mother's letter to a briefly known daughter

'Because of you, I'm no longer afraid of death because I know I'll see you'

DEAR Bea,

Mother's day is coming up... Can you believe it? I should be celebrating this with you in my arms, your head resting on my shoulder. I've pictured this "Johnson&Johnson's" moment a million times... It would be set in my newly painted yellow room filled with all my old toys and books together with your new ones, with "The Look of Love" playing in the background.

But no. I'll never be able to hold you in my arms, never feel your head resting on my shoulder. I'll hear "The Look of Love" but you won't be there to share it with me. You won't be there to play with all the Fisher-Price toys and stuffed bears and won't be able to sit in the playpens your grandma and I fought over...because I lost you a month ago.

I do accept that. But there are times when I feel guilty. I know I did not smoke nor drink the past nine months. Still I feel responsible for your death even though everyone around me says that things happen for a reason, and that you were just an angel who came down to save me. But to me, since I brought you into this life, it was *my* fault. You were a fighter—struggling, wanting to live... sometimes, I think, maybe even wanting to see me.

I feel guilty that I wasn't there to help you during the operation. I felt bad when I saw all these strangers laying their hands on you. I was thinking that you must have been so scared to be surrounded by people who were sticking tubes and needles in you. Like you, I was afraid. I wished I could have reached out to you. As I watched the video, I wished I could have reached my hand in there and grabbed you into my arms. I regret not knowing you...not introducing myself to you.

Your Tita (my sister) even had dreams for you. Imagine, *my sister*. She was full of good dreams for you. She wanted you to be the first F1 female racer. I had dreams of you being a genius—speaking six different languages, learning a lot of things, becoming a jack-of-all-trades. All my friends were lining up to be godmothers, organizing three baby-showers and giving countless gifts.

People always say that you are a blessing. I know I had the best time while you were inside me. You brought so much grief after 23 hours of struggling and fighting, but then you also brought so much joy and enlightenment to my family and friends. The ice that divides your grandfather and I is slowly melting. I've started going out more with your Tita and using the computer more by chatting and e-mailing to your other tita. Your grandmother and I are so much closer than before (I felt so bad because she wanted me to keep on dancing. I did, too). Rumors that went around school don't bother me anymore. I've risen above them all...I feel like I can do anything now. I can be just like you.

To tell you the truth, I was afraid. Don't think that I wanted to get rid of you! I was afraid you'd be the butt of jokes, get teased by people in school or be the subject of nasty rumors. I hated the fact that I hurt my entire family by getting pregnant. But in the end, it finally dawned on me—you'd know the truth, you'd know ,what really happened.

If I had known you so better, we would have been best friends. You and me against the world! I'm not only going to stay up all night waiting for you to come home from a party—I'm going to go *pick you up* from that party. I'll explain everything to you, not hide anything. I'll be honest. I'll give you the best opportunities in life...the best education, let you travel around.

I'll never be able to do any of that for you. But maybe someday, I will get the chance...with your sister or brother. Someday they will rest their heads on my shoulder. They'll hear our song play in the background as I hush them to sleep, or as they reach for those little red, black and white blocks hanging from the crib. I'll hear the little pitter-patter of feet, the cries of hunger and for attention from the same crib that should have been yours. They'd wear clothes that are similar to yours—matching ensembles, of course. And I'll always remember you, Bea. Because of you, I no longer am afraid of death, because I know I'll see you...

Thank you for giving me a second chance in life, Bea. I would live all my 19 years on earth all over again just to have you. I love you...

Love,
Mommy

P.S. When we do meet, wear the Carters jumpsuit and Gap rubber shoes we dressed you up in, okay?

Answered prayer

I'm a single parent. By choice.

I once read in a magazine that it is hard being single in a double-digit society. I declare it is much harder being a single parent in a society that puts a high premium on the conventional family. It is difficult to contend with people who have no qualms asking about my situation (like I'm a member of the walking wounded). My situation becomes doubly hard because I constantly have to push myself to the limit in order to ensure a bright future for my son.

My son's very existence is an answered prayer. I had been such a spoiled flighty girl who led a directionless life that he has become my anchor. And I am proud to say that he loves me just as much.

Trying to find a balance between being a disciplinarian and a spoiler is quite difficult, more so since I am his only parent. I worry about his health all the time—he is such a hyper little kid that he has destroyed a lot of appliances, including the electric fan in his classroom. He rarely gets sick but when he does, I get panicky.

To be honest, I dread the day when I have to tell him about the circumstances surrounding his existence. I might not even have the answers to the questions he will inevitably throw my way. I worry that people may not accept and appreciate him for what and who he is. I worry that he may feel less special, less loved.

Luckily, I have a family who has never left my side, who showers my son with all the love they could muster. I am infinitely grateful to my mom who has never wavered in her belief in me although I have disappointed her several times. My Tita Nanette, who is practically my second mother, is so protective of my son and to this very day, I consider her our pillar of strength. It is a blessing that my brothers have never, not even once, shown resentment for my being an unwed mother. It is also quite a blessing that my boyfriend Erwin has willingly taken on the role of being my son's father.

As I am writing this, I am unaware that my son digs up his new Play Doh that I've tried to hide from him. He comes up to me and tells me, "Hey Mom, I have Play Doh!" I am about to freak out because he makes quite a mess. Then he comes up to me, gives me a kiss and a cardboard with the words (made out in Play Doh), "I LOVE YOU MOMEEE!" I guess it's my first Mother's Day card.

Jules Alcantara

The most beautiful, bar none

THE FAMILY was watching a beauty contest one night, and it was time for the question-and-answer portion. The question for one of the candidates was, "Who for you is the most beautiful woman?" I said out loud, "My mom." I meant that would be the answer the candidate was most likely to answer.

My mom, who was right beside me, turned to me and said, "*Totoo ba?*" And on the screen, the candidate was explaining why her mother was the most beautiful woman on earth. I never replied to my mom's question.

My sister and I used to pore over old photographs of my mother. We used to tease her about looking a bit like Gloria Diaz, when both of them were young. The same thin frame, long neck and hair, pouty lips and slanted eyes. My aunt once told me a story about how my mom dressed when she was young. She was asked to help serve drinks during a wake and she wore short skirts that slid up a little whenever she bent over. Needless to say, she got a major lecture from my *lolo*.

Now, the resemblance and the short skirt are no more. Over the years, the slim figure has rounded a bit. Her head is beginning to be covered with white hair, and her hands, covered with veins. Every night, and sometimes in the morning, she complains of arthritis. She sometimes forgets things, and you have to wait for her when walking home from church. One can simply blame these things on age, but I wonder if the same things can be blamed on us.

I am the reason my mother has had to endure extra stress from work. My childhood memory of my mother is that of a woman who left in the morning and returned early evening. I can never imagine her as a housewife. It is far from the image I have of her, coming home late, with her nose buried in a bunch of papers.

At first, I bawled my eyes out just to prevent her from going to the office. The thought of being stuck with my *yaya* and bratty sister was enough to let loose my tear duct floodgates. But then, what could I do? After hearing the monotonous explanation, "Mama has to work," there was simply nothing I could do. I would just have to accept it. But that was just at first. Later, I realized that Mama being stuck in office meant Jason being able to run free with the neighborhood kids. She could have been a terror teacher who wouldn't let me do anything besides study. And so having a working mom for a mother became a sweet deal for me.

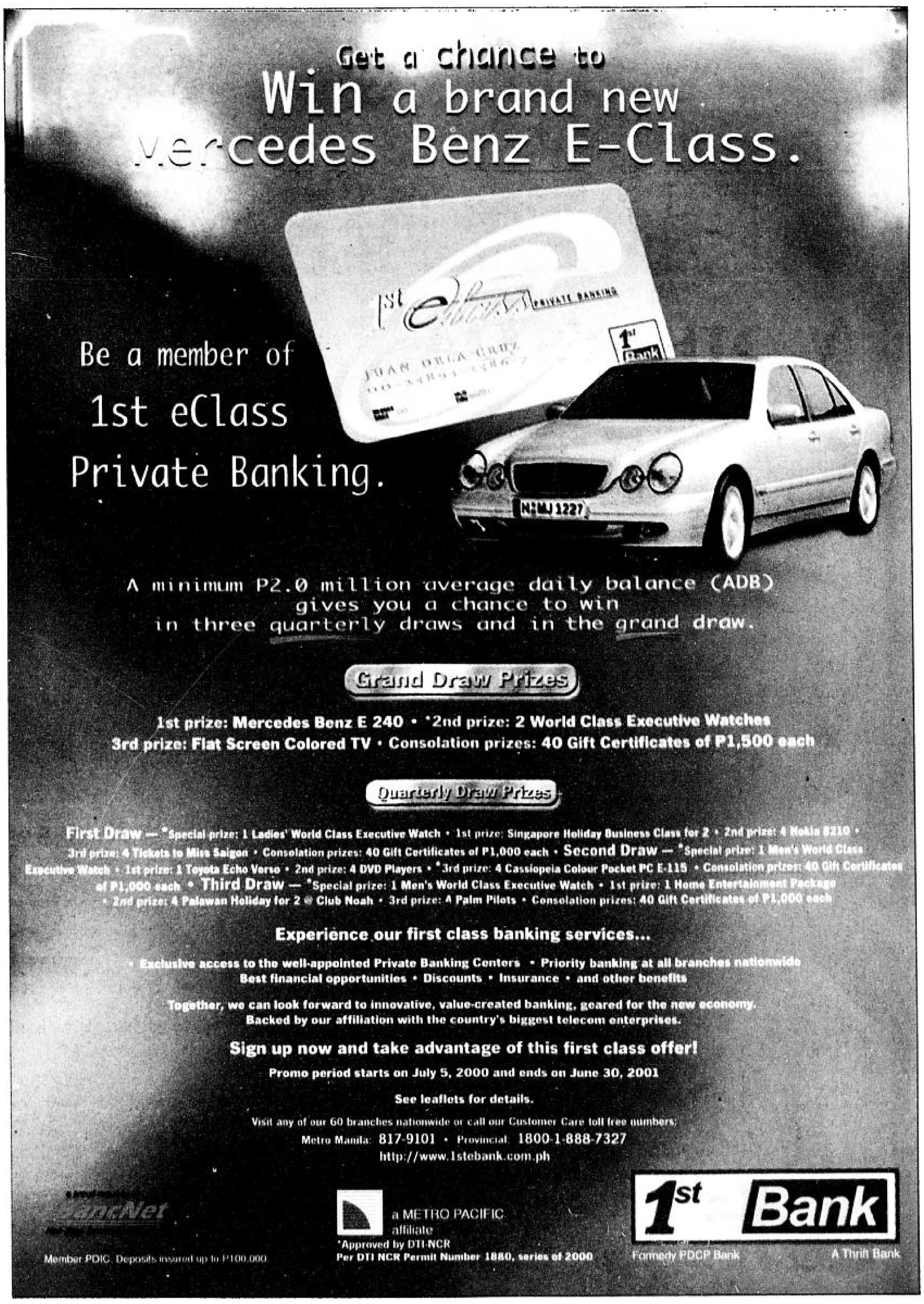
I had thought the reason she was working was to make extra income for the family. However, I realized that extra was hardly a word that applied. My parents had used up all their savings for their children's education. And I barely studied.

In senior high, students are suckered in by materialistic pursuits like pagers, signature clothes and shoes and concert tickets. Needless to say, I was a sucker. So I always had something to sulk about—the extra allowance I didn't get, the old shoes I'd have to endure wearing again, always there was something. I envied my classmates whose moms didn't have to work because they were well off.

Then a pang of guilt hit me. My mother wasn't working for herself. If she wanted to, she could've just gone off to her home province, where she's been dreaming of retiring. Instead, she has put that burden on herself because she wants to see us become successful in the future. In her work (and ours, too) was our future.

The night of the beauty contest when I sat in silence, not answering her question, I did so out of respect and a desire to honor the most beautiful person in my life. *Jason Doplito*

Editor's note: These are love letters, Moms—in case you haven't noticed.



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2BU! RECOMMENDS

Surprise, surprise

YOUR mom serves you hand and foot 365 days a year. Don't you think it's about time you did something nice for her? 2bU! tells you how to do it below.

Breakfast in bed. Since you were a scrawny preschooler, your mom has been waking up at 5 a.m. to prepare breakfast for you. This time, wake her up your way. Cook for her (no burnt toast, please). Pancakes will do if you spruce up the tray with nice flowers and serve her. That's the key word. Serve.

Do-it-yourself dinner. If you're not a morning person (although waking up early is such a small sacrifice for someone who has given you so much, don't you think?), maybe dinner for the entire family would be more your thing. You may even ask your siblings to help. Have them set the table and help you cook. If you're no kitchen whiz, prepare pasta or salad—or try some of granny's no-sweat recipes.

Soap it up. Clean, clean, clean. Clean your room, clean the bathroom, the car, the house. One thing that might bring tears to your mom's eyes is the sight of you with a broom in your hand.

Play Cupid. Believe it or not, your mom and dad used to have a love life. They were probably even as mushy as you and your loved one. But since you and your siblings sprouted, they've hardly had any time left for romance. Give them this day. Set a date for them—from the flowers to the restaurant reservations. If you're feeling extra generous, book them an overnight stay in a hotel. You know they deserve the break.

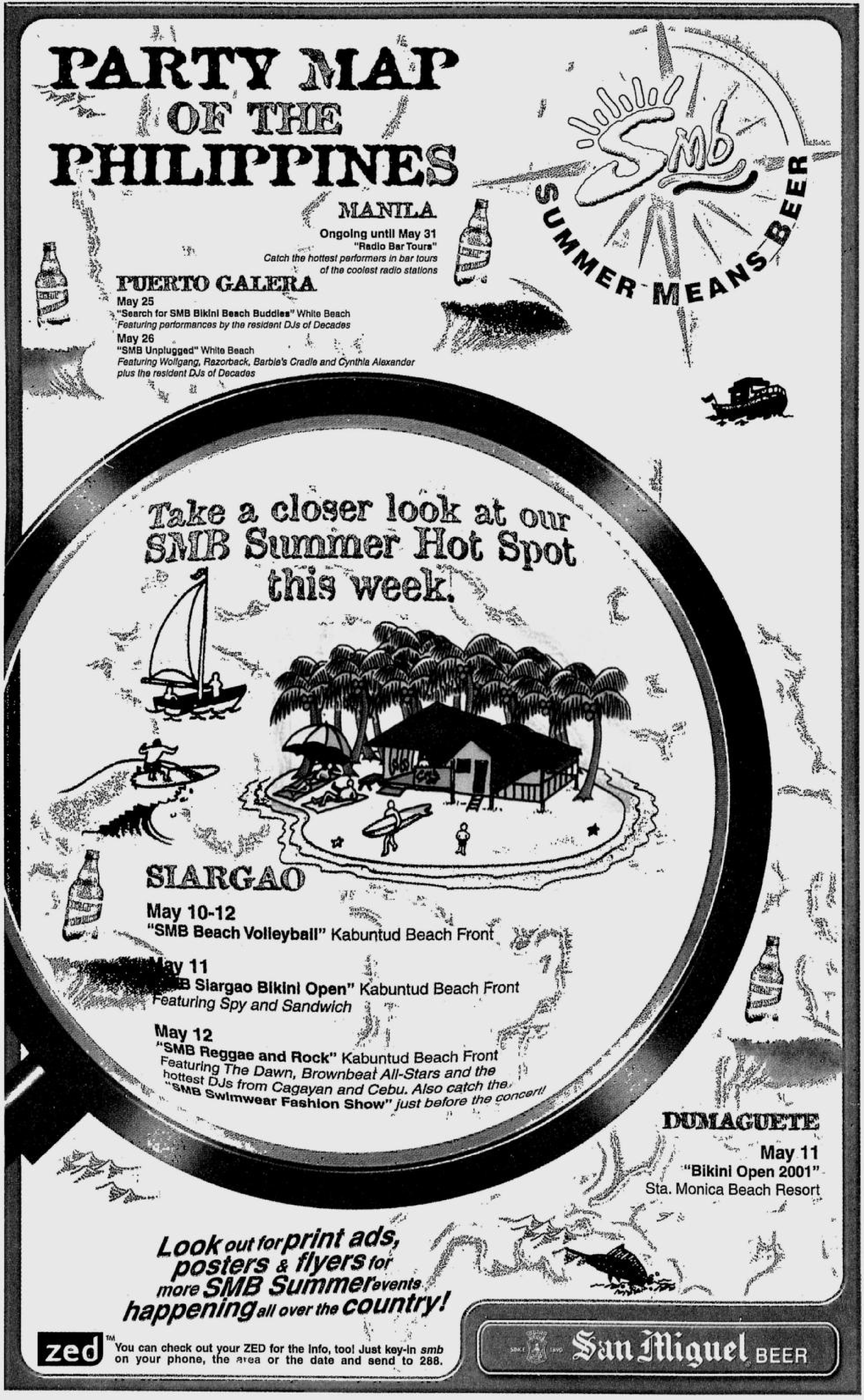
Mother is the easiest person to please, if you just take the time

Trip down memory lane. Moms, for some reason, like things that you made yourself. Compile all your memories in a scrapbook—old photos, cards, letters. Get creative. There are no limits. If you're technology-savvy, create a website for her. (Of course, you'd have to teach her about the wonders of the Internet after—and believe me, that's a nerve-racking experience, to say the least.) If editing is more your thing, compile your old home videos into a work of art. If your mom's a music lover, put together her favorite songs in one tape or CD.

Spa and salon treatment. The "I'm-getting-old-and-feeling-so-ugly" drama comes with the territory if you're a mother. Give her a treat she will surely enjoy. Let your mom feel like a queen as she experiences the luxurious massage, facial, hand and foot treatments, jacuzzi, etc., etc., etc. That's one day of pure heaven that your mom will enjoy.

Go out with your mom—and this time, you foot the bill. Shopping sprees, eating binges, trips abroad, she's been paying for them all her life. Go out with her—and this time, pay for the bill.

Have a slumber party with Mom. Help your mom feel like a kid again. If you have sisters, that would even be better. Have a girls' night in your own house. Give each other makeovers. Paint each other's nails. Rent movies from the neighborhood video store, microwave bags of popcorn and settle back and enjoy a marathon with your mom. If you're feeling really brave, play Truth or Dare with your mom. Then again, scrap that last idea. You want Mother's Day to be happy, right?



PARTY MAP OF THE PHILIPPINES

SMB SUMMER MEANS BEER

MANILA
Ongoing until May 31
"Radio Bar Tours"
Catch the hottest performers in bar tours of the coolest radio stations

PUERTO GALERA
May 25
"Search for SMB Bikini Beach Buddies" White Beach
Featuring performances by the resident DJs of Decades
May 26
"SMB Unplugged" White Beach
Featuring Wolfgang, Razorback, Barbie's Cradle and Cynthia Alexander plus the resident DJs of Decades

Take a closer look at our SMB Summer Hot Spot this week.

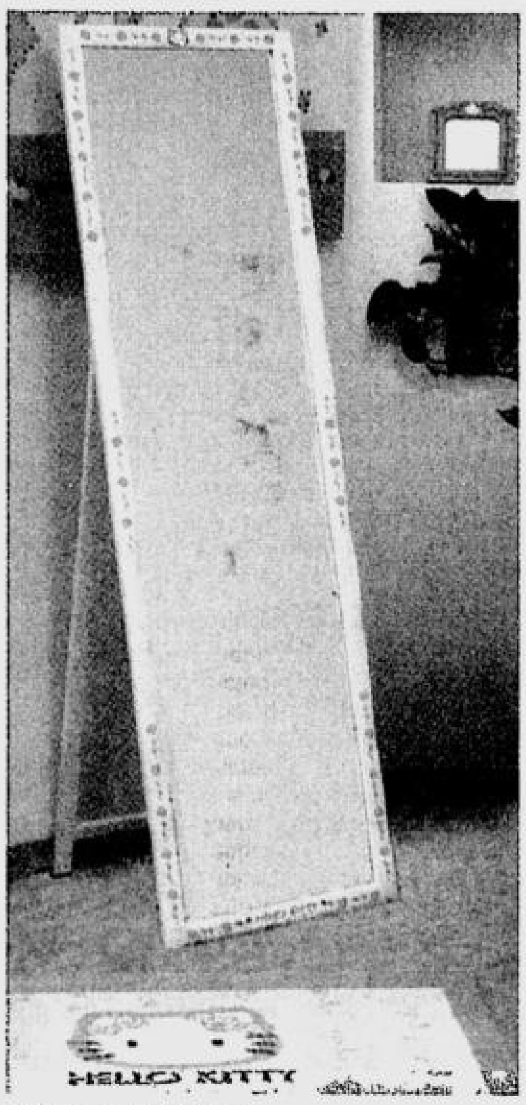
SIARGAO
May 10-12
"SMB Beach Volleyball" Kabuntud Beach Front
May 11
"SMB Siargao Bikini Open" Kabuntud Beach Front
Featuring Spy and Sandwich
May 12
"SMB Reggae and Rock" Kabuntud Beach Front
Featuring The Dawn, Brownbeat All-Stars and the hottest DJs from Cagayan and Cebu. Also catch the "SMB Swimwear Fashion Show" *just before the concert!*

DUMAGUETE
May 11
"Bikini Open 2001"
Sta. Monica Beach Resort

Look out for print ads, posters & flyers for more SMB Summer events happening all over the country!

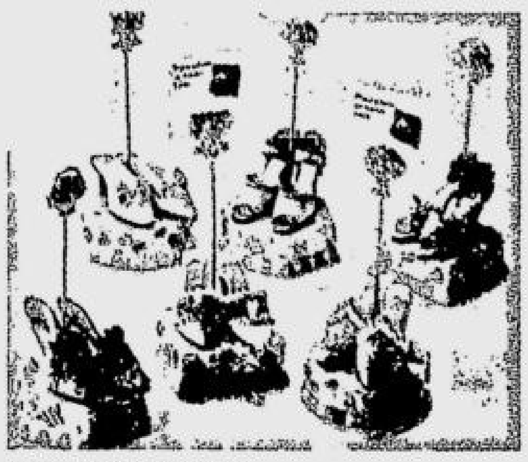
zed™ You can check out your ZED for the info, too! Just key-in *smb* on your phone, the area or the date and send to 288.

San Miguel BEER



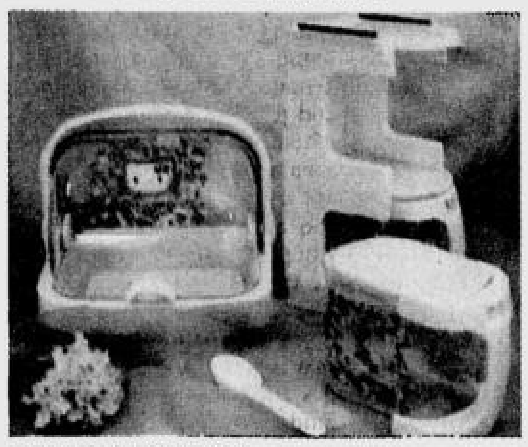
PURR-FECT GIFTS

Bedroom collectibles from Hello Kitty are gift ideas that will add a feline touch to Mom's domain. The new Hello Kitty full-length mirror could be exactly what she needs. There is a matching dresser. Easy to assemble, it is accented with pink roses and comes with a mirror and a cushioned seat with a secret compartment underneath. Hello Kitty, which is exclusively distributed by Gift Gate Inc., is available at se-lected Gift Gate Stores and Sanrio Surprises in Metro Manila.



RUSS FOR MOM

For Mother's Day, Russ presents a line of gifts with distinction, like fashionable card and photo holders, miniature handbags and slippers. An assortment of miniature planters and photo frames will help show your love on this day. Russ, which is exclusively distributed by Gift Gate Inc., is available at the Russ Shop, Red Lane Glorietta and all Gift Gate Stores nationwide.



HELLO MOMMY

Add a touch of fun to your mom's kitchen with some very useful everyday items. Store morning essentials like coffee, sugar and bread in Hello Kitty's flower-designed containers. Have drinks and snacks with Hello Kitty's new line of beverage bottle, glass, tumbler and snack bowl items. And give your mom something to show off to other Hello Kitty collectors when they come to visit. Hello Kitty's dinner collection is perfect for enter-taining guests. Get a complete set consisting of pasta plate, microwavable dish, spoons, forks, knives and glasses. Exclusively distributed by Gift Gate Inc., Hello Kitty items are available at Gift Gate Gallery in Glorietta and Gift Gate-SM Megamall B.